

HEADPRESS

THE JOURNAL OF SEX RELIGION DEATH

Issue 12

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EDITORIAL

What's this? Another issue of HEADPRESS out so soon? Okay, so we said we were going bi-annual in the last issue, but by now you should know not to trust what we say as far as regularity goes.

When there are only two people on the deck it's pretty tricky trying to stick to your ETAs, but our intention now is to aim at the previously promised, but never achieved, 4 issues per annum... having said that, anything could happen (after all, the next one due is #13!), so you'll just have to bear with us and see how things go!

Thanks to those who responded to last issue's request for 'video nasty' material and if we haven't got back to you personally yet, we will do, so please excuse our temporary ignorance. We are also bringing together media reports of supposed copycat crimes, particularly those claimed to be influenced by film - "I killed my mom after watching *The Terminator*." - that kind of stuff. Anyone who can supply copies of news-clippings relating to such events will be very much appreciated.

David Slater

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**HEADPRESS,
the journal of Sex Religion Death**

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editors, and are for informational purposes only, anyway — to help make the planet a better and spiritually richer place in which to live.

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Ideas, suggestions, contributions, reviews, artwork and letters are always welcome. All unsolicited materials ought to be accompanied by an SAE, though. If it's valuable, send it registered. Where can I get...? enquiries — sorry, but if you don't see it in the Culture Guide we don't get the address.

Front cover *The Bedroom* courtesy Screen Edge

ENLIGHTENMENT THRU ENNUI!

or 101 things to contemplate while your brain tumour grows

Howard Lake

Received my first-ever death threat a few weeks ago, the first in 10 years of hacking out a living as a scribe. Okay, it wasn't addressed to me in person, but to the editorial staff of the jazzmag for whom I labour, but as 50% of that, I like to think the neo-Nazi in question had me in mind when they penned their sub-literate, schizoid scrawl threatening dire consequences if we... if we — well, he never did say what or why or how the fuck we'd offended this bearer of the Aryan torch from Wales, of all friggin' places; which was kinda disappointing 'cos if you're gonna piss off an ESN needledick like that it's nice to know just what you did so's you can do it again every month. Maybe one reference too many to sheep-shagging or something...

Anyhow, if the Adolf of the Valleys intended to strike fear into your correspondent's entrails he failed abysmally. Gave us a good laff, mind; we stuck it on the pinboard next to the soiled schoolgirl's knickers we got last year from Leicester and the picture of the mutant Negroid dick received from a reader in New Orleans — the detritus porn dredges up never fails to intrigue and amuse. If anything, all the bedroom-fuehrer really did was remind me of how much we are riven with ennui right now; of how much we are waiting, each and every one, for some shit to come down, for something to happen, for godsakes.

We've heard all the theories going by now; we've taken on board all the information. In a relatively short period of time all of us have wallowed like pigs in shit thru the revelation of the Endtime, every half-assed and full-figured hypothesis from viral epidemiology to societal disintegration to media psychosis to alien abduction/rectal rape to the certain, irrefutable evidence that Cilla Black be the

harbinger of apocalypse, and now all we can do is sit back, skin up and wait to see which of the fuckers comes out on top (Latest betting 2/1 we all die of something grisly; 3/1 a lemming-like madness drives us all to leap off Beachy Head; 7/2 Some loony towelhead gets the Bomb; 33/1 Bar). Sure, we got apocalypse sewn up; all the signs, omens and portents checked and recorded — there's nothing now can deter us from the belief that this is Endtime and it can't be long afore we're all marched off whatever battlements finally get designated our ultimate jump-off point, so... what now?

One thing's certain: the End, when it arrives, will be televised. Thus, there's no especial reason to leave the couch. Buy in cable, satellite, rent some nasty kinkfuck tapes for the quiet periods when CNN's running one of those dumbass of-course-the-youth-will-save-the-planet! eco-wank shows; lay in sufficient quantities of brain-n-body numbing narcotics to last 'til judgement day and you got yourself sorted. Satisfied the conditions are in place for the whole shithouse to come tumbling down with a pungent stink, you can quietly go crazy on your own time... excepting those pesky, oh-so-annoying periods when you have to go do whatever crud-work it is you do to maintain your sleazoid sybarite lifestyle. Natch, there's no point in being ambitious, no point in working toward anything long-term 'cause there ain't gonna be any long-term, so what's left but to wait, eh?

And it's the waiting gets you down, right? Filling in all the days betwixt Now and When; as each new day fails to bring on the supposedly-impending doom of which you're so assured. Nothing to do but scan the channels for omens of acceleration, signs that hope is further receding. In this respect, we've got plenty to keep the warm glow inside aflicker: The Quarterpounder Brainmush Crisis; The Alaskan HAARP Mindfuck Machine; Ebola+ (new and Improved!) Steadily Marching Northward; Global Dick-Shrinkage Rampant... and so on and so on and so much more grist to any self-respecting Endtimer's mill. But, for all that, you still gotta wait and waiting is the worst; waiting on time, waiting for it to deliver rather than dicking around like Tyson padding out the rounds with pirouettes and pas-de-deux before

sending Frank 'I'm A Cheap Margarine' Bruno to the canvas (NB: readers requiring an explanation of that gag should contact the author).

Of course, the waiting makes you crazy as waiting always does. The oft-aided falsehood regarding These Times is that the amphetamine pace of contemporary existence has us all by the parts and we're collectively swept along toward oblivion with only burnout, stress and eventual psychosis to steady our ship along the way. The truth is different; the truth is that our speedfreak society operates only for short periods at a time — the remainder, 75%+ say, is spent in the waiting for that mania to seize us. Consequently, even the waiting is overlaid with tension and creeping panic the closer we come to being hurled once more into the fast lane to dodge the recklessly-driven juggernauts of daily life. And it gets worse: our lives become saturated with what's best called 'pending activity', those no-things we do while waiting for something to happen, be it the chance to make a buck or two, or grab our chance for fame and glory, or for the spindryer at the corner Laundromat to become free. And the pending activity kills you — moments become minutes become hours and resentment builds that you have to do this at all. Experience is doled out in content-free longeurs; stuff you want to do you never can find the time: you're free to do as you please, but never sufficiently free to do as you want...

Waiting breeds ennui breeds frustration. Yeah, bring the shit down; let's have disease and despair and carcasses piled ten-high in Oxford Street. Let's watch the onscreen graphic of the fallout from Saddam's nuking Tel Aviv head thissaway. Compared to boredom, shitting your innards as you bleed from both eyes might be, well, y'know, *interesting*. I mean, you can get too much from the media sometimes; their sick jokes are almost as good as yours... I'm thinking of the newest teevee

genre: Horribly Diseased Infant Exploitation, as seen in any number of primetime 'real life' shows, a genre so base and twisted even the worst mondo moviemaker would have second thoughts about tackling it. I'm enough jaded to be past that embarrassing 'censorshit' debate whining; if folks find sob-sagas featuring pre-pubers on the brink of death a valid entertainment form, let 'em have the fucking things — why get into a snit over the 'I can see this, but not this' shtick? That said, how come those shows containing 'scenes some viewers may find disturbing' always fail to deliver the goods, huh? Attention programme-makers! If you're really serious about showing us how fucked up, misanthropic, self-loathing, scumfuk-crowded and shot to shit the world is, then stop cheating us, okay?

Uh-huh, we're back to the media once again — your correspondent's #1 obsession and all that — but, like I said, what else is there to do while we wait for Endtime to get underway? After all, it's not like anyone else out there's doing anything worth getting involved in, not unless you fancy living up a tree and spouting bullshit 'bout how Mother Gaia must be aided against the relentless stamping boot of progress or, conversely, spending your weekends clad in dead macho camouflage fatigues, talking guns, black helicopters and NWO with like-minded moustache-cultivators. Both activities seem pretty useless to couch-bound me, but then it beats sitting around waiting, I guess. Hmm, I suppose I could take advantage of the void all this ennui's created and turn it into a nice lil' earner like, say, Jim Keith does — got your edition of *Black Helicopters Over America* have you? Only \$12.95 and I'm sure Jim believes *every word* he writes is true...just like I really believe Sexy Suzie from Stoke-on-Trent genuinely loves any guy's dick in any orifice. All the same, if there's a market out there it oughta be exploited, 'cause if you don't then sure as shit someone else will. And people got an awful lotta time on their hands while they're waiting — time that could be amply occupied by whatever tripe can be stuffed down their gullible throats; it might sound like bullshit but — hey! — makes you *think* dunnit?

And next it's Internet Time and, yeah, I can hear you groaning already. Hard to think of anything which better encapsulates the ennui of waiting than the mindless mediocrity to be found in the cybervoid (or is it cyberspace), where consumption of time is everything and every anorak from here to Anchorage can finally get together for communal zit-popping and circle jerks. Not knocking it *per se*, you understand (for one thing, I've got plans to use it to turn a quid or two), but anyone who proclaims This Is The Future needs a cerebral lead-enema PDQ. Or maybe, us Endtimers are wrong and the future really will be a morass of *Star Trek* trivia and pixels of Pamela Anderson taking a popshot from a donkey as cunningly photoengineered by Kurt in Des Moines — in which case, bring on the toxins and the genetic fuckups and let's go like *NOW*...

In the end though, what it all comes down to is Meaning. Why the hell do you read H/Press? What purpose does getting deep into the groovy, far-out, fucked-up, strung-out shit of the Endtime play in your life? A handle on what's going down, you say; an understanding of the forces controlling my life in all its facets. Your leaders lie, your governments oppress you and stifle your freedom of expression; the food you eat contains lethal toxins that will give you cancer; the drugs you enjoy are proscribed while far the more dangerous booze-n-fags are lovedolls humped by corporations for cash and lubed by their fuck-buddies in power. The System is geared to prevent you rising above your station; an elite — the Bildenbergs, the Trilaterals — oversees your continued subservience; even sex isn't fun anymore since some shit screwed around with the microbes and unleashed HIV. So descend, why don'tcha, into a world of chaos and madness where the Endtime is celebrated in gouts of poison sperm in evermore-depraved fuckflicks, where mutilation, defecation and wholesale psychopathy is the true representation of what homosapiens actually is; where blood, piss and hard drugs substitute for oils, pencils and canvas; where — ultimately, finally —

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the common language is a shared wall of despair. Herein lies our understanding, our meaning; that we are all as one misbegotten, redundant, disenfranchised and F.U.C.K.E.D... doesn't mean you can't have a giggle 'bout it, tho'.

For all the knowledge we continue to accumulate, for every artist who smears him or herself with excrement to make a statement, to communicate, the end result remains the same. The world still turns and the scum also rises. Recent talk in a bar with a couple of family men: your correspondent, boozed-n-wired, sounds off as to why he wouldn't be so dumb as to help bring a child into a world of shit like this...draws appalled gasps from assembled breeder-boys:

"How old are you?"

"Thirty-One."

"How can you be 31 and so fuckin' cynical?"

Hmm, how old do you need to be? I got understanding, pal; I got The Knowledge! Sure, you could be wrong, methinks — perhaps the sole purpose of life is to couple and reproduce; perhaps I'm so far gone in despair and misanthropy I cannot look at an infant without thinking: you're fucked, kid. But if this is How It Is now, then what's it gonna be like when the brat hits 31? Maybe me, you and the rest of us swimming around in the scumpool see things with a greater degree of clarity...or maybe we're just so fucked up on whatever be our favourite poison we don't see anything at all — in other words, maybe we're wrong...

You know? Perhaps, deep down inside, I'm agnostic about Endtime, but if that's the case then I'm sure as shit an atheist when it comes to Hope. Searching for meaning, understanding and truth seems a valid kinda way to occupy the waiting. It seems preferable, certainly, to the rash of commentators cropping up everywhere with this 'don't panic; it's only millennial uncertainty' shtick, the line we see peddled repeatedly in the kind of media directed toward them who need comfort, the

masses huddled in suburban cosiness who just don't want to know that the comfort and prosperity they toiled for all their life may soon come crashing down around them; the kind who are shocked to find their offspring necking every drug they can lay their hands on — a revelation that prompts untold wails of "Why??" but not one rational thought of what might be the real reasoning their kid chose to disregard parental advice... the latest thing, I hear, is to hire a PI to check up that Junior's not fixing on skag; yep, that's really gonna work, right...?

Dismissing the omens of civilisation in a state of near-collapse as pre-millennial tension is fine — if you can offer us a credible alternative scenario. Then again, it's probably safe to assume the cottonwool-commentators belong to the breed that can afford to protect themselves from the shit when it finally begins to rain — the enclaved classes, who'll happily squat on top of a dunghill and won't be bothered by the stench because the view's absolutely gorgeous, dear! You wonder, as you read and hear the opinions of such arbiters of consensus consciousness, who's the crazy fucker? You, or them? Or all of us? Fuck, I guess even the likes of Tony Parsons and Woodrow Wyatt need *something* to occupy their time while waiting.

They don't know any better, so they've nothing to be concerned about. They think they know, but then we all think we know better, we're all 100% certain we know which way the tide is turning. But there's nothing can be done, no quick fix except that you buy from the Man Who Can, no salvation except in degradation, no humanity except in misanthropy, no culture except in the banal... no meaning except in ennui.

We know the theories. We know how it is, how it has been, and how it will be. All that's left is to wait. There's no need to quit the fags, lay off the booze, stop pumping chemicals into yourself. Assassination won't solve anything (although assassination of high-profile figures is Lake's Hot Tip for '96/'97) — you shoot the President, they get another President. Bombing McDonald's won't make them throw in the burger biz. Protest is futile, resistance is useless... all in all, every scrap of knowledge in the world ain't gonna help you — waiting's all we have left.

See ya in the terminal ward...

LAKE

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SODOM

an appreciation

David Kerekes

When Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1975 picture Salò, o le Centoventi Giornate di Sodoma makes a rare appearance on Britain's cinema screens, more often than not it is in a cut form and, at the suggestion of the British Board of Film Classification, with the addition of an opening comment; not a warning as such but a map and an attempt at historical perspective on the story.

Totally superficial, this introduction looks to belong to some other picture and conjures images of browbeaten distributors, bewildered as to what to do with the picture let alone what it's supposed to be about. Furthermore, the picture is known in Britain as Pasolini's 120 Days of Sodom... Pasolini being a director of serious movies and all.

At the age of 14, I 'discovered' de Sade — in a decrepit bookstore in Manchester owned by 'Harry'. Looking back, it kind of reminds me of that episode in Dennis Cooper's novel, *Frisk*, where Dennis as a boy befriends the owner of a decrepit bookshop and gets to look at pornography.

Harry had lots of pornography. More to the point, he would let us look through it. A single table for a dozen piles of half-back-exchange, dog-eared magazines, some with noticeable traces of gunk about their pages. There was a little window which looked out over the main street, meaning you could easily shuffle away from the table should it look like anyone else might wander in. One day a weird-looking guy sauntered through the door, went up to Harry and whispered in his ear. The guy was an obvious nut. Harry didn't care, he hollered out loud and clear, "Do we have any dirty books? No, we clean them everyday!" like that was some kind of big joke, and the guy left. He occasionally got busted for pornography. When plain clothes police officers came in, he would throw his arms into the air and bellow, "Yes! This way gentlemen! Take the magazines while I go and mug somebody in the street!" You could tell they were 'plain clothes' because no one dressed like that.

All this was at a time when pornography in Britain was at its strongest. Essentially still softcore,¹ magazines like *Private* and *Whitehouse* actually went as far as to show dildos in vaginas, and fingers pulling labia wide for the camera. These particular titles had some of the sleaziest-looking girls, too. Some looked to have just taken a breather from walking the streets,

while others would frock themselves in the sweetest outfit, clutch teddy-bears and engage their most sultry innocent expression for the camera. At least one photo spread per issue would be 'the baby oil' shot (the ethic being that *really turned-on* women would be positively oozing quim juice). For a period of time, it was possible to pick up *Listen with Whitehouse*-type publications — the same magazine but with a free flexi-disc single. What a riot they were. Even at the impressionable age of 14, there was something very ridiculous about playing records on which some lush crackbaggy would relate





nefarious sexploits in a 'sexy' Scottish accent. (The best one of these I ever heard had a supposed carnal encounter between a swinging couple on a train. While the dude was having his John Thomas blown, the girl blowing was speaking clearly and slurping at the same time. Try and work that one out...)

Such magazines competed with one another throughout the mid-Seventies. One high street title — purporting to be 'educational' — had a photo-spread depicting how women, who thought themselves frigid, might like to loosen up. The tail of a Pink Panther doll inserted into various orifices proved the unlikely solution. Another 'educational' title warned against

Sadism (?) by depicting the barrel of a gun inserted into the mouth of a semi-naked girl, several times over and from varying angles. The Courts soon put a stop to it all. David Sullivan — publisher of *Private* and *Whitehouse* — explained that he had gone into riskier photographs after being visited by the police about the written matter in one of his magazines; he decided that if he was going to be at risk of prosecution anyway, there was no point in playing safe with the pictures.²

Harry had a neat collection of underground comic, too. I got Wally Wood's *Gang Bang!* from there. And a great badass interracial thing called *White Whore Funnies* ("My head swims with utter ecstasy as we fuck faster and faster! White woman! Black man! Honkie bitch! Nigger bastard!"). For a time he had a 'basement' — quite literally a hole in the floor through which you descended via a pair of stepladders. He had a load of musty smelling record albums down there. Rare stuff on occasion. The basement didn't last long however, seeing as all but his regular customers had to be constantly reminded not to fall into the hole.

He would unearth authentic 1950s pocketbooks: a dozen-or-so pages showing Diana Dors or some other starlet lounging in their bikini. One of these was in 3D. But there was always such a wealth of stuff, you'd wouldn't bother with half of it.

One day, in the corner of the shop, on the top-most shelf, stood two gargantuan paperback volumes. Both bound in white. Both as thick as your fist. I pulled down the first, a battered tome. *Juliette. The Marquis de*

Sade. The author needed no introduction. Although copies of his works were near-impossible to find in Britain, the affiliation between de Sade and 'sadism' wasn't entirely oblique: Even the local library held a copy of Simone de Beauvoir's essay *Must We Burn de Sade?* Indeed, it had been Beauvoir's book — and the many allusions to corruption, perversion and excess therein — that had so fired my imagination. More so upon figuring that the author was coyly avoiding all but the most stoic of de Sade's passages in illustrating his argument.

Sure, the central reference library in Manchester held copies of de Sade's work... but only in their original French language. Were the words of this man really that powerful? I began to think so when I later turned up an old British printing of *Justine*. Though the cover announced 'unabridged', the most shocking thing about the book was that I had been scuppered yet again: de Sade wrote several versions of *Justine*, each subsequent retelling of the story that much more elaborate than the last. And guess which version this was, dear reader? And what little vileness there might have been was switched back into French at the pertinent moment.³ Ugliness, it would seem, is safe with scholars.

"Président, your prick's stiff," the Duc said.

Harry's was the only place that could turn something up like that. De Sade. American imports. I bartered against the high price tag on the two volumes, but Harry wouldn't have it. "They're gonna go" were his final words on the matter. I really needed to read de Sade. I really needed both those books. Alas, with enough cash in my britches for but one, intellectual that I am, I opted for the *thickest* of the volumes. *The 120 Days of Sodom*.

[SIMPLE PASSIONS]

One day, returning from my holy occupations, my sister asked me whether I had yet encountered Father Laurent...

So relates Madame Duclos, the first of *Sodom's* four storytellers.

"Have you ever seen anything to equal it?... that's what they call a prick, my little one, yes, a prick... it's used for fucking, and what you're going to see, what's going to flow out of it in a moment or two, is the seed wherefrom you were created. I've shown it to your sister, I've shown it to all the little girls of your age, lend a hand, help it along, help get it out, do as your sister does, she's got it out of me twenty times and more... I show them my prick, and then what do you suppose I do? I squirt the fuck in their face... That's my passion my child, I have no other... and you're about to behold it."

And at the same time I felt myself completely drenched in a white spray, it soaked me from head to foot, some drops of it had leapt even into my eyes, for my little head came to the height of his fly.

Madame Duclos, 48 years of age, has been entrusted to detail the one hundred and fifty *simple passions* (of which the above is number one); anecdotes from her debauched life. With her final passion, Duclos describes her encounter as a young woman with the Marquis de Mesanges. By appointment the Madame arrives at the Marquis' mansion. Contrary to being pleased to see her, the Marquis is in an uproar over being disturbed. He howls and tells the terrified woman that her last minutes have arrived. He tears off her clothes, throws them to the fire, screams that the whore is to follow. "Yes, indeed, by sweet Jesus, I'm going to burn you alive, you bitch, I'm going to have the pleasure of inhaling the aroma of your burning flesh." Delirious, he then discharges upon the remnants of flaming clothes.

Duclos takes up much of the first 300 pages of the 120 Days, each of her tales becoming progressively more demanding. Far from being the focus, however, the Madame is merely a part of the scenario of the novel: her stories are not directed specifically at us, the reader, but those characters around her.

The principle cast of de Sade's book consists of four libertine men: the Duc de Blangis, his brother the Bishop, the *Président de Curval*, and the banker Durcet; and their four daughters (whom they later marry): Constance, Adélaïde, Julie and Aline. Inordinately wealthy, the men have dispatched 17 parties throughout France, each with the order to procure nine girls aged between 12 and 15. After a period of 10 months, the companies rendezvous at one of the Duc's estates. Determining between "high birth, virtuousness, and the most delicious visage possible," of the 153 kidnapped subjects, a total of eight girls are selected (the remainder are "kicked out, set at large, alone and without a guide"). Agents have also been posted to search the country for "little boys," and eight well-endowed young men — or "fuckers". The requisite here is that each man must own a prick no smaller than 12 inches ("Bum-Cleaver" is the exception; he might prove only eight inches when erect, but wields such a crooked member that it is "nearly impossible for him to perform an embuggery without splitting the ass").

The final search undertaken is for the ladies-in-waiting. Four truly loathsome creatures, eventually located in Paris. Of these, the derelict called Fanchon is repugnance incarnate: she is flat-nosed, short, fat, suffers a squint, has almost no forehead, nothing but two teeth in her stinking mouth, the skin of her ass is discoloured and inflamed, huge haemorrhoids swing from her anus, a cancer has consumed her vagina, and one of her thighs is completely burned. She vomits regularly and her asshole is so large that she farts and shits quite unawares. "Beauty," argues de Sade, "belongs to the sphere of the simple, the ordinary, whilst ugliness is something extraordinary, and there is no question but that every ardent imagination prefers in lubricity the extraordinary to the commonplace."⁴

Of the storytellers, Madame Duclos we have already met. She is championed by Madames Champville, Martaine, and Desgranges. Having spent their lives in the most furious debauch, these four ladies are, nonetheless, "endowed with a certain eloquence

and a fitting turn of mind." Each recapitulation from these women will trigger our four libertines towards greater debases.

The company depart for Durcet's isolated château of Silling, a damning place perched high atop a mountain, whose precipices provide but one single route of ascension negotiable only by foot (taking a full five hours). Once the summit is reached, a crevice 60 yards wide, a 1,000 feet deep, needs to be traversed. A wooden bridge is the only means. Over the bridge, a little plain of about four acres is cloaked from view by sheer crags rising skyward; the château is set on these four acres, protected by a wall 30 feet high and a deep moat. Behind our entourage, the wooden bridge is demolished, the mountain itself guarded by a village of ruthless thieves and smugglers, and the locale hidden deep within the Black Forest. For four months, there will be no conceivable way in or out.

Our libertines — "friends", or "Lords" — administer statutes. To flaunt these is punishable by death. They range from the time the company shall rise each morning, to how and when the children are to relieve themselves (in the chapel and only with permission). At six o'clock each day, the respective storyteller takes the throne and the assembly their places before her.

The one hundred and fifty simple passions — as presented by Madame Duclos — compose the narration for the month of November. For December, it is the one hundred and fifty complex passions composing the narration of Madame Champville; for January, Madame Martaine and the criminal passions; February, Madame Desgranges and the murderous passions.

[COMPLEX PASSIONS]

111. He keeps a girl suspended head downward until he discharges.

112. Makes her swallow a heavy dose of emetic, persuades her she has been poisoned, and frigs himself while watching her vomit.

113. Kneads and mauls her breasts until they are entirely black and blue.

[CRIMINAL PASSIONS]

119. After having had her lick his bespitted ass with her tongue, he snips off the end of that same tongue, then, when once she is mutilated, he embuggers her.

120. He employs a machine involving a hollow steel bit which bores holes in the flesh and which, when removed, takes with it a round chunk of flesh which is as long as the drill has penetrated; the machine bores on automatically if not withdrawn.

121. He transforms a boy of ten or twelve into a eunuch.

The simple passions excepted, de Sade never completed his book beyond draft form (if he had, one can assume the novel to have been some two thousand pages in length). What's left is an anecdotal catalogue of atrocity, sketchy outlines that the author intended to elaborate upon later. Without the rhetoric and philosophies, as found in the Simple passions, these

latter three passions have no check and are quite unbearable. Naturally, the Murderous passions are the most scandalous. Spurred by the narrative of Madame Desgranges, our Lords finally embark on the immolation of the children and elder subjects. Not that they kill outright, but leave death protracted and painful.

[MURDEROUS PASSIONS]

Escorted by Desgranges and Duclos, the Duc and Curval make a journey to the cellars with Augustine in the course of that night; her ass has been preserved in excellent condition, 'tis now lashed to tatters, then the two brothers alternatively embueger her, but guard their seed, and then the Duc gives her fifty-eight wounds in the buttocks, pours boiling oil into each gash. He drives a hot iron into her cunt, another into her ass, and fucks her wounded charms, his prick sheathed in a sealskin condom which worsens the already lamentable state of her privities. That accomplished, the flesh is peeled away from the bones of her arms and her legs, which bones are sawed in several different places, then her nerves are laid bare in four adjacent places, the nerve ends are tied to a short stick which, like a tourniquet, is twisted, thus drawing forth the aforesaid nerves, which are very delicate parts of the human anatomy and, which, when mistreated, cause the patient to suffer much. Augustine's agonies are unheard of.

She is given some respite and allowed to recruit her strength, then Messieurs resume work, but this time, as the nerves are pulled into sight, they are scraped with the blade of a knife. The friends complete that operation and now move elsewhere; a hole is bored in her throat, her tongue is drawn back, down, and passed through it, 'tis a comical effect, they broil her remaining breast, then, clutching a scalpel, the Duc thrusts his hand into her cunt and cuts through the partition dividing the anus from the vagina; he throws aside the scalpel, reintroduces his hand, and rummaging about in her entrails, forces her to shit through her cunt, another amusing stunt; then, availing himself of the same entrance, he reaches up and tears open her stomach. Next, they concentrate upon her visage: cut away her ears, burn her nasal passages, blind her eyes with molten sealing wax, girdle her cranium, hang her by the hair, attach heavy stones to her feet, and allow her to drop: the top of the skull remains dangling.

She was still breathing when she fell, and the Duc encountered her in this sorry state; he discharged and came away only the more enraged. They split her belly, opened her, and applied fire to her entrails; scalpel in hand, the Président burrows in her chest and harasses her heart, puncturing it in several places. 'Twas only then her soul fled her body; at the age of fifteen years and eight months thus perished one of the most heavenly creatures ever formed by Nature's skilful hand. Etc.⁵

It all became quite suddenly, clear. I would one day be arrested and have to try and explain the comparative worth of de Sade's novel; moreover, why I should



possess such a book.

I had read so much and found myself unable to go on. I was losing the few friends I had reciting passages, and duly returned the volume for a cash exchange at Harry's. Like the Videodrome signal, however, contact with that book had instilled some malignancy within. The images were quite unstoppable. Before long, I found myself hunting for de Sade once more. It came as a shock and surprise when I did again encounter the 120 Days, many years later: reprinted by a major British publishing house⁶ and displayed openly in a 'respectable' bookshop. I told the cashier so — 'I don't believe it.'

De Sade penned *Les 120 Journées de Sodome* while imprisoned in the Bastille. Allegations of sexual scandal,⁷ indebtedness and successful escape attempts from other holdings led to his eventual internment at the great fortress on 29 February 1784. Here, in a cell measuring 16 feet square, writing in minute script, on 22 October 1785 de Sade commenced his *magnum opus*.

It has been called everything from one of the most vile books ever written, to a masterly revelation of the darker fantasies of a human mind. Unlike his other work — much of which was published during his lifetime — it is argued that de Sade never intended the 120 Days for publication.⁸ Quite plausibly, its unfinished state is attributable to the author becoming bored with the whole thing, for, come 25 November 1786, he was already at work on another literary project: *Aline and Valcour*.

It wouldn't be inconceivable to think that de Sade had limited big-screen potential. Not so. However, with a few exceptions, the pictures that tackle de Sade tend to avoid the writings and concentrate on the man — or, rather, the image and myth of the man.⁹ Without doubt, the closest a director has come to translating the 'divine essence of monstrosity' to the screen, comes courtesy of Saló, or the 120 Days of Sodom [Italy/France, 1975]. In this, Pier Pasolini manages to conjure a harrowing and disconsolate world, one moulded by narcissism. But if the philosophies of Saló are mad, they are maddeningly valid.

All things are good when carried to excess.

In the film, the setting of the original work is

transposed to Italy, 1944-45, and the end of Nazi occupation. The rest of the country is falling to the Allies; what Fascist power remains is concentrated in the tiny northern Republic of Salò. De Sade's original vision easily lends itself to this interpretation.¹⁰ As one of the character's (borrowing from de Sade) notes: The only true anarchy is the anarchy of power.

Pasolini has awarded his film few liberties. His players undertake all the principle debaucheries, and conclude with mutilation and murder. The whole thing is terribly bleak. The only recess to be had are the terrible jokes made by the President (which succeed only in making things seem all the more hopeless).

Events commence with four local dignitaries selecting the most suited group of children and young studs to take to their isolated château. One girl is denied because of a missing tooth. Another boy is chosen because his father is a respected and influential man. Once at the château, the men address the company:

"Listen you insignificant wretched nothings. You are here solely for our pleasure, expect none of the kindness you knew on the outside world, like liberty, or ridiculous ideas like showing pity to others. In our world, our will is the only legality. No one on this earth knows that you are here. As far as the world is concerned, you are already dead."

The first meal is celebrated with a rendition of 'The Black Flag', a Fascist hymn (a scene prompting the film's obscenity trial in Italy, when a division of the Italian army objected to the use of the song in this context).

Pasolini has opted for a sizeably more restrained structure to his 120 Days than that of de Sade's six hundred passions. He utilises only three of the storytellers, and divides the movie between each of the following: *Circle of Manias*, *Circle of Shit*, and *Circle of Blood*. A pianist accompanies each narrative with a jolly up-tempo number. As tales are related, the dignitaries may decide to drag a child off to an ante-room for a little 'relief'. In one episode, the children are made to imitate hounds and led through the chambers on a leash. The four friends throw to them scraps of food. One girl finds a mouthful of tacks when she bites into the food provided her. When comes the *Circle of Shit*, a banquet of fresh human excrement is provided for the entourage.¹¹ With the *Circle of Blood*, the jaunty pianist adopts a more sombre accompaniment. The narrative tells of a rat being sewn within one girl's vagina, a machine that flays another girl

alive, and a third girl who is fed into a furnace feet first and still alive.

When the last day arrives, the company are led into a courtyard where they are tortured to death. Each of the four dignitaries takes it in turn to watch the proceedings, via binoculars, from a window. Horrific scenes of carnage ensue, as victims have lighted candles applied to their genitalia, are fucked before being hung from a noose, are spread-eagle and scalped, have their tongue snipped off, or have their eyes gouged, or are garrotted. The Duke reverses his binoculars and looks at the scene in long-shot. The frame of the window fractures the objective yet further.

Undoubtedly Pasolini has evoked the spirit of de Sade in his movie, but has he not evoked that spirit too well? Indeed, "all things may be good when carried to excess," but the medium of cinema decrees that there be a measure of restraint involved, and the restraint here manifests itself in a humourless, soulless, impenetrable film. Shocking and tedious by equal measure.

Perhaps the most interesting aspects of the piece are its nuances. A rumbling can sometimes be heard on the soundtrack (I counted three instances), sounding like nothing, really — though one can suppose it be 'enemy' aircraft. As sound was dubbed post-production, the noise is deliberate. The pianist throws herself to her death at the close of the picture. It could be that she has a daughter in the company facing execution. Whatever the reason, it has long since been retracted from the script. Most interesting of all is the slaughter itself — at a distance and through binoculars. Pasolini has said

that he tried to avoid showing victims whose side the viewers could be on. "I am in no way trying to arouse sympathy," he said, "the film would lose its sting if I did." But it's a double-edged credo, one that makes the deaths anonymous, hence: more palatable.

Pasolini was murdered on 1 November 1975, shortly after completion of his film. The plan had been to shoot Salò in 37 working days, but the schedule required extending. He was surprised to hear that de Sade had taken 37 days to write his book, and a little disappointed that he wasn't able to duplicate the feat.

Another thing I got from Harry's was *Demonique*, a publication devoted to obscure and trashy horror movies. Issue four distinguished Pasolini's Salò with the header 'Art Corner.' As if that made a difference.

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Notes

1. Hardcore pornography was and still is illegal in Great Britain. An erect penis is unlawful, so too penetration of the vagina. In recent years, even the female buttohole itself has disappeared from glossy top shelf mags (i.e. *Mayfair*, *Club International*), concealed by a well-positioned piece of clothing or a hand. The reasoning being, presumably, so as not to tempt the hot-blooded male readership into backdoor ways — forbidden by law in Britain between heterosexuals up until last year.
2. **Obscenity and Film Censorship: An Abridgement of The Williams Report**, edited by Bernard Williams. Cambridge University Press, 1981.
3. The title, *Justine*, was somewhat misleading in this case. This bland and — contrary to the publishers statement — expurgated American translation, was actually based on *The Misfortunes of Virtue*, de Sade's first interpretation of the story.
4. De Sade's Introduction to *The 120 Days of Sodom*.
5. Interestingly, several years ago, when an earlier version of this article was submitted to the Greek language volume, in *Extremis*, the editor of that book wrote back to say that the Greek translation of *The 120 Days* — in comparison to the excerpts I had supplied him — were considerably different. Not abridged as such, but worded in a 'safer' way.
6. Arena Books, London, 1989.
7. Ranging from poisoning for pleasure, incitement to sodomy, actual sodomy itself, and 'murderous debauch.'
8. The manuscript disappeared amidst the turmoil of the French revolution in 1789, was rediscovered at the end of the nineteenth century, in possession of a French family, and was at last published in 1904.
9. Jess Franco's *Justine*, Franco's Eugénie, Claude Pierson's *Justine de Sade*, Jacques Scandalari's *Philosophy in the Boudoir*, Stewart Mackinnon's *Justine*, and Chris Boger's *Cruel Passion* are all films adapting — after a fashion — de Sade's works. Max Hunter's *The Bloody Pit of*

- Horror* claims to be "based" on de Sade. Freddie Francis' *The Skull* awards de Sade — more precisely, his skull — with supernatural powers. Peter Brook's *Marat/Sade* has de Sade directing a play in an asylum. Cy Endfield's *De Sade* is a biography of the man in the AIP tradition, replete with psychedelic bargains. The Marquis as flagellant makes an appearance in Anthony Hyckox's *Waxwork*, while Henri Xhonneaux's *Marquis* is another biographical piece — except here de Sade is seen as an aristocratic spaniel who spends his time in the Bastille talking to his erect penis.
10. There is another parallel: that this be *Hell itself*. The movie opens to the announcement *Ante Inferno*. The three parts to the film are named 'Circles', in reference to Dante's circular descent into the 'Inferno'. One subject, thinking himself about to be shot in the head, is told by a Lord, "You must be stupid to think that death would be so easy. Don't you know that we intend to kill you a thousand times over, until the end of eternity... if there could be an end to eternity."
 11. At a festival of Pasolini's work some years ago, the steadily, already-filtering-away packed house for *Salò* emptied virtually en masse with this particular scene.

Books

- THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY DAYS OF SODOM** De Sade, Marquis.
Arena Books, London, 1989.
- THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM** (a stageplay freely adapted from the novel by the Marquis de Sade). Hedges, Nick Delectation Books, London, 1991

Magazines

- SIGHT AND SOUND** [Vol. 45, No.1], Penelope Houston, Winter 1975/76, London.
- FILMS AND FILMING** [Vol.21, No.12, issue No.252], Robin Bean, September 1975, London.
- EXCITING CINEMA** [Vol.1, No.9], Wil Castleton, 1971, London.
- DEMONIQUE** [No.4], Barry Kaufman, 1987, Los Angeles

MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN [various issues through the mid-Seventies], London.

Movies

- THE BLOODY PIT OF HORROR** (aka. *The Crimson Executioner*). Dir. Max Hunter, Italy, 1965.
- CRUEL PASSION** Dir. Chris Boger, GB, 1977.
- DE SADE** (German title *Der Marquis de Sade*). Dir. Cy Endfield, USA/West Germany, 1969.
- DIALOGUE BETWEEN A PRIEST AND A DYING MAN** (*Short film*) Dir. Ramond Lefevre (France 1977)
- EUGÉNIE... THE STORY OF HER JOURNEY INTO PERVERSION** Dir. Jesus Franco, Spain/West Germany/GB, 1969
- JUSTINE**, Dir. Jesus Franco, Italy/West Germany, 1968
- JUSTINE**, Dir. Stewart Mackinnon, GB, 1976.
- JUSTINE DE SADE** (aka *The Violation of Justine*). Dir. Claude Pierson, France/Italy/Canada, 1974
- MARAT/SADE (THE PERSECUTION AND ASSASSINATION OF JEAN-PAUL MARAT AS PERFORMED BY THE INMATES OF THE ASYLUM OF CHARENTON UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MARQUIS DE SADE)** Dir. Peter Brook, GB, 1967.
- MARQUIS** Dir. Henri Xhonneaux, Belgium/France, 1989.
- PHILOSOPHY IN THE BOUDOIR** (aka. *Beyond Love and Evil*) Dir. Jacques Scandalari, France, 1969.
- SALÒ, OR THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM** (aka. *Pasolini's 120 Days of Sodom*). Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini, Italy/France, 1975
- THE SKULL** Dir. Freddie Francis, GB, 1965.
- WAXWORK** Dir. Anthony Hyckox, USA, 1986
- TOBE HOOPER'S NIGHT TERRORS** Dir. Tobe Hooper, USA, 1993

Know any shady bookshops? Picked up any 'bargains'? We want to know! Send your experiences in to Headpress — the best will appear in future issues.

APOCALYPSE NOW?

the coming-end cultists

James Marriott

Only four years to go now... It's difficult to say with any degree of certainty whether there is more apocalyptic cult activity now than 50 years ago, particularly as a disinterested observer such as myself only finds out about them after they've committed some especially newsworthy atrocity.

The religious life of the entire Twentieth Century has been clearly informed by the coming end of the Millennium, and any number of shady and shrewd spiritual caretakers have lost no opportunity throughout the century to fleece their feeble-headed followers by duping them with sure-fire means of avoiding the more incendiary aspects of Judgement Day — but cult activity does seem to be coming to a head, although how much this can be attributed to the ordering facilities of the mass media can only be guessed at.

It fact it seems to me that the Seventies represented a greater boom time for both 'legitimate' cults and prefab philosophers than this decade, principally due to a

directionless yet idealistic fervour in the charred aftermath of mammoth and popular Sixties LSD binges and a general and undiscerning belief that any spiritual activity was better than none. Although there is now probably a far greater proportion of drug users in the population than ever before, it seems unlikely that they would fall into the same trap, present-day LSD doses being generally more recreational than crippling and happy metaphysics being in many circles considered entirely laughable — I ignore here the McKenna brothers and their legions of devotees.

But I digress... One of the interesting things about present-day apocalypse culture is the variety of ways in which the apocalypse is seen. There are those groups who consider it in an entirely negative light; these tend to be Evangelical or related groups whose apocalyptic rationale is as follows: Their leaders want them to believe in impending doom so that they will give their soon-to-be-worthless money to 'God's own Church' in the hope of purchasing a last-minute reprieve from the Almighty; and the followers believe, not only for this reason, but also because consideration of this steers them away from their personal and domestic problems and global issues which might otherwise seem more pressing. Who cares, if it's all going to end soon anyway?

The more interesting of current apocalyptic cults view the impending cataclysm in a positive light. There are large numbers of UFO cultists who believe that a revelation is in the offing, that all will soon be revealed by our Sirian and Acuran friends; a number of DMT fanatics I've had the dubious pleasure of knowing have also related similar convictions, but more to the effect



that we will soon be released from our dimensional boundaries and be free to roam the space-time continuum at our leisure.

There is also the view, perhaps best exemplified by far right US groups who reached new heights of notoriety following the Oklahoma bombing, that as the impending breakdown of society will allow fatigue-clad hordes to shoot guns at will and not pay taxes, it should be speedily catalysed by strategic attacks on societal institutions. In fact, the best rhetorical techniques I have come across for bringing about such a governmental downfall have been in the early writings of William Burroughs (who, however, is probably too radically liberal to be on the reading lists of most rednecks).

Related to this is a concept found in a number of recent novels and movies, in which a misguided megalomaniac and his following determine society to be in such a dire state that they decide to force a change by making things so much worse, that the government has to react. As a plot device it usually comes across as jaded and absurd — 'destroying the world to save the world' — but worked exceptionally well in Alan Moore's seminal comic *Watchmen*.

I'm personally surprised that there haven't been more Luddite movements, apart from a handful of eco-terrorists, whose anti-technology efforts are hardly extremely specific — logging operations, experimental

laboratories, etc — and ignore the wider dangers of the technological boom. I saw a string of exceptionally bad popular movies recently, whose subtexts struck a deep chord in me — Disclosure was both the worst and most interesting of these. Michael Douglas stumbling through a world whose dangers he can only perceive in terms of fleshly temptation, apparently blind to the unstoppable march of technology in the background, not only threatening his livelihood but also his very humanity...

I'll admit that the fears sound far-fetched, and cannot deny that technology (which shouldn't even be considered in a monolithic sense) has brought me much happiness and ease of living, but I think about P.K. Dick, who's androids are ultimately no different from humans — only more efficient — and wonder whether Artificial Intelligence, still only in its gestation period, might not ultimately be our true apocalypse, our unwitting writing of ourselves out of the evolutionary cycle.

This is not really a source of serious concern to me, but it is interesting that technological change, possibly the central fact of the late-Twentieth Century, remains ignored by almost all apocalyptic cults (except 'Aum Shinrojo'), which indeed tend to fall the other way, loading their preachings and predictions with irrational and explicitly superstitious ideas.

In any case, I'm waiting to have a bar code tattooed on my arm before getting really worried...

POSTSCRIPT

Typically, immediately after submitting my piece 'Apocalypse Now?', I discovered that my conclusions were in many ways unfounded: there are a number of anti-technology collectives, although few dealing in an apocalyptic coin, active and popular now in the US, and the recent media exposure afforded the suspected Unabomber has drawn renewed attention to them. As I note in the piece, it is difficult to access information regarding the activity of the more deviant cults until they either collapse from internal struggle or arouse the wrath and subsequent armed response of the local authorities — their secrecy can be taken as either paranoid or realistic depending on one's viewpoint. Even following the collapse of a cult, it is difficult to find any non-biased information regarding their activities, the swathe of sensationalist literature that floods out being invariably written by hacks pandering to the most base forms of prurience.

As cultism in its many guises,

from UFO abductee cults to the 'children' of the Reverend Moon, grows in popularity (look at Scientology — it only takes numbers, time and John Travolta for a cult to become a recognised religion), so too does anti-cult fervour. The *Sinner's Bible*, an excellent US publication listing organisations and addresses of interest — from porn to psychedelics via pirate radio (see end for more information) — lists the following organisation: Cult Awareness Network — 2421 West Pratt Blvd, Suite 1173, Chicago, IL 60645 — 'Lots of books and publications about cults. Unfortunately CAN fights the cults and provides no addresses or numbers to get in touch with them. I mean, hell, they're called Cult Awareness Network. But they should be called Harmful Effects of Mind Control As Used by Destructive Cults Awareness Network or HEMCAUDCAN, because I'm really no more aware of the cult network that I was before. Oh, well. Anyone out there have a truly good source of cult info?'

The above organisation was

recently ordered by a federal jury in Washington State to pay \$4,870-5,000 in damages to a member of the Pentecostal church who was the victim of a failed violent deprogramming in 1993, and allegedly spends a good deal of time and effort harassing 'legitimate' religious organisations such as 'The Family' (who'd do better to my mind if they changed their name to something less redolent of acid-scrambled hippie killers — for more info regarding the harassment of The Family, see end).

The acceptable face of the anti-technology movement in the US is represented by such neo-Luddite scribes as Kirkpatrick Sale, who wrote *Rebels Against the Future: The Luddites and Their War on the Industrial Revolution* — 'What I'm talking about in my newest book are computerised systems that have been imposed upon us without our assent. They destroy our experience of nature. And, of course, they take our jobs.' Then there are a number of works advancing now hackneyed arguments against the Internet — while none of these writers have

had the impact of a Ralph Nader or an Alvin Toffler (both currently very active, Nader even running for President in the forthcoming US election), they do have a degree of political support and have had significant sales — although they can hardly be construed as apocalypse theorists. Sale has been known however to garb himself at a number of forums in archaic vestments and to surrender his spirit to that of Ned Ludd, which possesses him to smash PCs with a sledgehammer. The future of Performance Art? Pete Townshend as cultural innovator, anyone?

The unacceptable face of the anti-technology movement is represented, in the eyes of the media for today at least, in the Unabomber, and more particularly in suspect Theodore Kaczynski. To my shame I bought a copy of Time which sported a photo of the

Thoreau-like recluse looking a little like Charles Manson on the cover, with the words 'Mad Genius' in lurid red print to one side. While I knew that the magazine hadn't contained any worthwhile journalism in at least the last 10 years, I was still stunned by the asininity, extreme bias and sensationalism that characterised their piece on the Unabomber. Amongst their more glaring lacks was their failure to mention the support that the Unabomber's ideals, if not his methods, have garnered across the States. Some local papers carried front-page details of sympathy for the hermit's cause, but to read Time or Newsweek one might think him the most hated mad in America.

April 19th, anniversary of both the Waco siege and the Oklahoma bombing, shall undoubtedly keep the US public on their toes — indeed the Freeman siege

currently underway in Montana looks set to be the site of another hideous cock-up... I only hope that whatever happens is not as horrific as its forerunners.

The Sinner's Bible cost me \$4 in the US. Contact Stinky, c/o Disciples of the Holy Green at PO Box 27663, LA, CA 90027-0663, USA; e-mail: stinky @ wavenet.com. peace

For more information about the persecution of The Family, see Paranoia vol. 4, no. 1, #12. Paranoia can and should be contacted at PO Box 1041, Providence, RI 02903, USA; e-mail: alhidell@aol.com. The editor of this fascinating and well-written magazine calls himself Al Hidell, which as any self-respecting paranoid knows, is the alias used on a number of occasions by Lee H. Oswald.

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NON-IDENTITY CARDS

John Light

Why does the Government keep pushing the idea of identity cards? The only reason I can imagine is that it believes it would be a cheap way of appearing to do something about rising public criticism of its failure to contain crime. Cheaper, that is, than providing enough policemen to deter the would-be criminal and to detect the already committed crime. But I doubt that the enormous cost of yet another bureaucratic agency, such as would be necessary for the operation of an identity card system, would produce benefit equal to the investment of the same amount of money in providing more beat policemen. The Government may pretend it's only going to be the unemployed and impoverished who have to have them to begin with, but once introduced they'll be imposed on everyone in time.

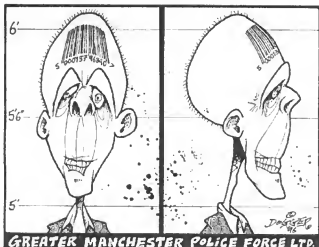
How would being forced to carry an identity card affect my life? The reason for being made to carry a card is so that I can be stopped by a policeman demanding to see it — just as the driver of a car can be stopped and told to produce a driving licence, either immediately or at the police station within so-many days. Maybe this hasn't happened to you. It's happened to both me and my son, perhaps because we don't have a new car!

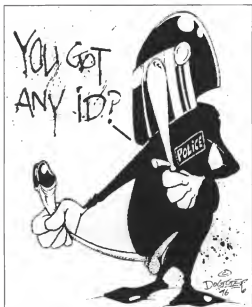
So if I forget to take my card with me wherever I go I will have to report to a police station if I'm stopped. Of course, every time a policeman demands to see a card he will log the incident on the police computer for anyone "in authority" to look at. If I lose my card doubtless I'll have to pay a fee — in effect a *fine* — to obtain a replacement.

How effective would the card be in protecting me against crime? How effective have all the limitations imposed on civil liberties been in preventing IRA atrocities? And consider the effect of bank cards. The banks allege that the card plus your pin number makes it impossible for anyone else to withdraw money from your account without your permission. Yet many people have had their accounts ransacked by criminals who have found it only too easy to duplicate the cards and obtain the relevant pin numbers. The banks refuse to acknowledge that this is possible, so the victims have faced almost insurmountable obstacles in securing redress. Again you may think this is something that only happens to other people. My daughter had

her card stolen and used by the thief to overdraw her account by more than £800 pounds before it could be stopped. Who was blamed for this? My daughter! Were the police interested in the real crime? No. It's lucky my daughter didn't have an identity card to be stolen.

If we all had identity cards there would immediately arise a lucrative business of forging them. The easiest way to fake an identity is to appropriate someone else's. A bit of hacking or a corrupt official and thousands of duplicate cards could appear. Then one night the police will break down your door with axes and drag you away because someone with a card duplicated from your details has used it to perpetrate a crime. I used to think





this sort of thing only happened to people too poor to live in "decent" neighbourhoods. In the small town in which I live, it recently happened that the door of a house belonging to two teachers at the local school was smashed in by police with axes and guns; the two teachers were dragged unclothed from their beds into the street. What had they done? They'd been the innocent victims of a police intelligence "mistake". (For "intelligence" I think we might substitute "computer collated gossip and speculation"!) Of course, it was too commonplace to be reported in the national press. How many other such mistakes occur in how many other small towns let alone big cities? There have been too many cases suggesting that police are desperate to convict anyone of a crime regardless of whether there is evidence against them, and there's no surprise in that since increasingly police forces are being funded according to "results".

Would it be only the police who were entitled to stop you and demand your card? I think not; traffic wardens, VAT officers, social workers, railway ticket inspectors and so on, would all be given the power in time. And people without the statutory right would nevertheless insist on seeing them; the banks wouldn't open an account for you without checking your card, shops wouldn't accept your cheques without the card, and soon pubs would refuse you admission, cinemas wouldn't let you in, and unless you had your card with you always there would be very little at all that you'd be able to do! The cards could readily encode details of defaults, convictions, complaints, suspicions, malicious gossip and anything else authority or commercial interests deemed useful, and these details could be read as easily as a Switch machine reads a Switch card. So if you are "undesirable" or are related to or know someone who is, don't imagine you'll get into a night-club, football match or cinema (maybe not even the

public library!).

Are you aware that there are four credit reference agencies that keep records of every registered voter in the United Kingdom (compiled from the electoral registers whose sale the Government encourages)? I enquired what they had on their computers about me (of course I had to pay a fee!), and discovered that not only did they have my name and address and the names of all my family but that the GIRO bank were selling details of my account and transactions to one of the agencies. Yet I have never asked anyone for credit and don't even have a credit card.

Perhaps you will feel that the well-known incompetence of the authorities will mean that in practice, the threats to individual freedom enabled by identity cards will not materialise. My experiences suggest that you would be wrong; all that incompetence ensures is that disaster is as likely to descend on the innocent as the guilty, indeed more likely since malefactors will be taking steps to hide from retribution. Some years ago I received a demand from the Chief Constable of Glasgow for payment of a fine for parking my car in a Glasgow street without a tax disk. Not only did my car have a current disk prominently displayed, but I hadn't been to Glasgow since I was a child, and on the day of the alleged offence my car was locked up in a garage in Leeds and I spent the whole day in York. But how can you prove such a thing? Luckily I had two witnesses who had been with me the whole day. Just another trivial police error.

Finally, remember that what the computer uses to register who you are is just a number and no one cares what fate befalls a number.

THE BRAM STOKER SOCIETY

A Dublin-based group with an international membership of 100 enthusiasts, devoted to studying the author's works and his influence on cinema, theatre and music. Annual subscription (£6) covers a Journal (annual), Newsletter (quarterly) and invitations to meetings of The Bram Stoker Club at Trinity College, Dublin. Contact: David Lass, Hon. Secretary, The Bram Stoker Club, Regent House, Trinity College, Dublin 2, Ireland. Fax: 003531 677 2694

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THE LONDON NECROPOLIS

and the magnificent 7 graveyards

H.E. Sawyer

Kensal Green cemetery opened in 1833 and is the longest surviving English cemetery still in private ownership. It's inception became necessary due to the overcrowding of the tiny churchyards situated in the capital. This chaotic situation developed as a result of the Industrial Revolution, when the influx of people led to the expansion of London.

The dead were buried like sardines, regardless of their status in society. The cramming reached scandalous proportions, with some of the unfortunates being interned in the steps of St. Olaves church in the city. Visible signs of this phenomenon exist today in the burial ground at Bunhill Fields, the resting place of William Blake and Daniel Defoe, although these celebrities were at least accorded central positions, on the main path.

Many contemporary writers, including Charles Dickens, protested vehemently to the appalling conditions. A solution was required. A barrister of the day, George Carden, was in agreement with Dickens, having campaigned successfully for the establishment of new cemeteries. He was successful in purchasing the 77 acre site in West London for the purpose of laying the dead to rest with some dignity. He simultaneously constructed a tranquil setting, with lawns and shrubs, for the recreation of the populace at large. Thus the first landscaped necropolis of London was a suitable place for the Victorians to contemplate their morality in a morally uplifting environment, where they could view the metropolis from the necropolis!!

To finance this ambitious venture, Carden formed the General Cemetery Company, selling the plots freehold, an ingenious, yet revolutionary idea for the time. The standing of the new cemetery at Kensal Green



Photo H.E. Sawyer

was increased by the subsequent internment of the children of King George III, who having seen the state of the royal vaults available, vowed to bury himself and his family elsewhere. So Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex and Princess Sophia, were laid to rest either side of the Anglican Chapel. As a direct result, the well-to-do flocked to buy the adjoining, expensive plots, so they could spend their afterlife in the company of the noble and distinguished. (Just imagine being buried next to Richard Branson!?) The notables of Kensal Green included Decimus Burton, Andrew Ducrow, Trollope, Thackeray, Sir Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Wilkie Collins and Blondin, the famous highwire artist. (Incidentally, Blondin actually carried his agent across Niagara Falls on his back, AND DIDN'T DROP HIM!!) As a consequence, the cemetery now boasts the most free-standing and spectacular mausolea of any cemetery in England, many being built whilst their owners were still alive.

Nowadays, it is still possible to be buried at Kensal Green, whatever your religious denomination. However, due to its freehold status, neither the general Cemetery Company, nor the voluntary Friends, are able to carry out maintenance to the individual markers, without a living relative's permission.

The Friends, supported by English Heritage, are active in locating the famous and the notorious occupants, whose graves have been overtaken by the relentless march of ivy and brambles. Their research has provided a valuable insight into Victorian life and their fascination of death and the afterlife.

Guided tours are held every Sunday at 2pm throughout the year, which cost £3 per person with no

concessions. The tour is preceded by an informative lecture, held in the main chapel. On the first Sunday of each month, the tour is shortened to allow an inspection of the catacombs, which afforded intramural burial to those unwilling to erect individual mausolea.

Kensal Green is well worth a visit, a tranquil place, teeming with wildlife, and is the most impressive of the "Magnificent 7" (see below) cemeteries that ring the capital. It is open from 9am to 6pm during the summer, and 9am to 5pm during the winter.

A Word of Warning

The East Gate shuts half an hour before closing. It takes at least 10 minutes to walk to either gate from the centre. The perimeter wall was built to deter graverobbers and is rather difficult to scale.

THE MAGNIFICENT 7

Highgate

If you look at London as a clock face, Highgate is at 12 o'clock. There are two 'yards' there, separated by a road. The nearest tube is Archway, then either an irregular bus or a bloody slog up hill. The east cemetery is shut. They took their last coffin in 1977, the actor Ralph Richardson, if I remember correctly. They do tours with a guide on Sundays. The first one kicks off at 11am and lasts for about 40 minutes. There's a fee of £2, plus a pass of another £2 if you want to take any pictures. This is now run by Friends of Highgate



Photo: H.E. Sawyer

Cemetery. It has a right snotty attitude and a sob story to go with it. They won't let you wander or smoke in the grounds, and although they recognise that Kensal is a whole lot bigger, they claim they're in "A better area". One of the reasons that's given for keeping the groups small — max. 12 people — is that some of the standing stones are unsafe... It's also quite overgrown, so a lot of the smaller and more interesting stones are hidden from view. They won't let you walk off the path either...

I didn't bother with the west cemetery, but I'll be going back, cos I'll probably do an article on Highgate for you in the future, but that's the side with Karl Marx.

Abney Park

Set at about 2 o'clock, in Stoke Newington. This is a bit more like it. It's doesn't have friends, so there's no fact sheet or tour and, like Kensal, they still bury here. It's well overgrown, but has a Jewish flavour to it, as does the local community. It's not on a hill, so it's pretty boggy. The "young offenders" were doing a spot of community service there, much to the frustration of the dirty mac brigade, who all walk round looking for the teasing young rascal who graffitied on a bench there: "If you want sex for £20, be here at 2pm on Fridays". There were quite a few "walkers" the Friday afternoon I was there, I can tell you, and they didn't have dogs with them, either.

Tower Hamlets

At 3 o'clock. Forget this, as it's so overgrown you can't see bugger all, and as you might guess, Tower Hamlets doesn't play up to its historical interest. It's also a bit of a poor area, so most of the stones are bog standard and boring.

Nunhead

4 o'clock. Can't tell you anything about this as it's the only one I haven't visited, but I will — only, Nunhead BR station is always shut on a bloody Sunday.

West Norwood

5 o'clock. This is a bit of everything. Most of it's managed, but they've kindly left some of it in an overgrown state. It also has a graveyard within a graveyard, with a walled area and gate houses that hold the Greeks of London. No friends to my knowledge, but I've got plenty of slides. Handy if you support Crystal Palace. (I don't.)

Brompton

8 o'clock and backs into Stamford Bridge football ground. Handy if you support Chelsea. (I don't.) Has a brilliant central section with a domed chapel and a mass of graves in a circle, that are all over the place. Bound to get touched for a quid from a ponce and it's a fave haunt of the rent boys in this part of the city. Again, I don't think it has friends, but I've got plenty of slides.

Kensal Green

10 o'clock. The biggest and in my opinion the best. Visit if you get the chance. Well worth it.

WALLOWING IN THE MEYER

an interview with Mr. Bosomania

Anthony Petkovich

BIG That pretty much sums up a Russ Meyer film. Mammothly-mammaried, hot-snatched, royally-rubenesque, man-eating vixens. Clenched-jawed, muscle-bursting, shit-don't-stink, freakishly-hung He-men. Sprawling, lunar-like desert landscapes. Even death is big in the Meyer universe. Characters don't just die with a whispered last gasp; they're liquidated with an eardrum-bustin' BANG! Charles Napier, for instance, in Super Vixens, stomping the tits off a sassy-mouthed, Vargas-like pinup in a bathtub (!) is as darkly orgasmic as it gets. Or the transsexual 'Z-Man the Teen Tycoon' spearing, decapitating, and gunning down drugged-out orgy goers in Beyond the Valley of the Dolls is Meyers at his best — and biggest. Small? The word doesn't exist in a Meyer movie. Only the sports cars are pint-sized. And even those are as integral to the hypnotic quirkiness of a classic like Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill! as the karate chops, snappy dialogue, and erotic magnetism of lead sexpots Tura Satana and Haji.

So what the fuck *is* a Meyer film all about? Hard to say. Sure, they're like comic strips come to life — but a breed all their own. Initially, with the nudie cuties of the late-Fifties and early-Sixties (*The Immoral Mr. Teas*, *Wild Gals of the Naked West*), Meyer focused on the joys of the overdeveloped female udder. Yet from the mid-Sixties up to the early-Seventies, he dabbled in other genres: crime (*Common-Law Cabin*; *Motor Psycho*; *Finders Keepers*, *Lovers Weepers*), tension between the sexes (*Vixen*, *Good Morning...* and *Good-bye*), and eventually satire (the best example being *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, parent to such later picaresque works as *Super Vixens*, *Upl*, and *Beneath the Valley of the Ultra Vixens*). Of course, in three decades of filmmaking, Meyer never overlooked his roots in the over-sized bra department. Consequently, while some critics have knocked Meyer for being sexist, gender-wise there's really no black and white in his films. His female characters are just as powerful, dangerous, and ballsy as his

males. For Mr Bosomania, the war of the sexes is constant (and constantly comical), with neither gender ultimately waving a flag of victory. The big, brass bed is only neutral ground where a man and woman can achieve that harmonious, Zen-like state of 'fuck' in the Land of Meyer. Amen.



Russ Meyer and his childhood buddy Lou Filpovich
Photo: Anthony Petkovich © San Leandro Times



Pandora Peaks

Recently, at a bar in the Oakland International Airport (over beer, beer, and more beer), a clean-shaven Meyer — trusty tripod at his side, waiting for a plane to whisk him down to Palm Desert — discussed life, sex, women, hooters, burlesque, and, of course, Meyermania.

HEADPRESS Do you work in video or film these days?

RUSS MEYER Always in film. You get much better quality than video. I use 35mm. I've made some 24 films and they've all been successful. Made a big breakthrough recently on HBO. They showed a film that I produced and directed at Fox called *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*. Roger Ebert, the noted film critic, did the script. Actually, he did more than co-write it. It's just that every now and then I'd make a suggestion. He's a good writer. He's done five of my films. After he did *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, however, he became a lot more known, so we had to use pseudonyms — Reinhold Timm, Otis Scribblebraus and so forth.

And now you're doing a documentary.

Yeah. I'm doing a documentary on a very famous stripper — Pandora Peaks. Absolute knockout. When I was doing a layout shoot with her for German Playboy, I asked her if she'd like to do a documentary. Originally it was 40 minutes long. Now it's 80 minutes long. It's a retrospective kind of thing, really. For two days I've been shooting stuff here. Being born in Oakland, I wanted a lot of documentary shots, specific things about Oakland and what it means to me. It'll be with Pandora and three other girls, one of them being Candy Samples, the legendary. A lot of great footage. It's very strong. Candy

did a lot of stuff with putting baseball bats between her tits, or a magnum of champagne.

So, would you mind clearing up the confusion as to where you grew up? Some say Oakland. Some say San Leandro. What's the real story?

I was raised in the Elmhurst district of Oakland, at 98th and Birch. I grew up with Lou Filipovich, a very good friend. See, Lou's mother used to care for me, because my mother used to work for what was called McMar in those days. Today it's called Safeway. Lou's mother was a dear lady. She took care of his sister, his younger brother, and me. A little later in my childhood, I moved to Modesto. My mother married a man who had a couple of houses, so it looked like a good idea. I enjoyed that very much. And then I moved back to Elmhurst and continued at Elmhurst junior high and then went to Castlemont. Today Lou and I got some shots at Castlemont, or what's left of it. There were some great murals that went along with it.

What happened after High School?

Well, shortly after graduating, I was a combat camera in World War II. Landed in Normandy, the Bulge and all that... filming. I was very heavy into the military, see. Had a lot of combat shots in Eisenhower's *True Glory*, which won the Academy Award in 1945. That was important to me. After returning from the war, I got a job over in San Francisco doing industrial films for Standard Oil, Associated Tide Water, Southern Pacific, Crown Zellerbach... the best background I could get. That was fun. It was a great basis of learning cinema. You went out by yourself with a cine special camera and just shot



Roger Ebert & Russ Meyer

footage, footage, footage, footage. I don't put film schools down. That's an effective way, too. I mean, it's more suitable for the major studios, where someone can graduate to being an assistant's assistant, or an assistant, and so on with a large crew. I myself enjoyed making two films at Fox. It was great. But, at the same time, there was really no difference, because I was in charge of everything. Had my eye in that view piece all the time. The cameraman would get pissed off and so on, but my attitude was: 'It's my film, and it's gonna be the way I want to make it.'

So, after the war, you started shooting industrial films in the Bay Area.

Right. Early-Fifties. I came home and my mother was living in San Leandro. I was a G.I. That's where I lived for a year. And that's how I got started taking pictures with a still camera, trying to pick up some extra money. Never shot any broads at that point. I was still doing these industrial films. I'd do weddings, too. At that time, the girls came into town and did their shows across from the Tribune... what was the name of that bar? Right across from Nolan's office. Anyhow, during the Fifties I got into shooting titty boom. I wanted to make more money, and Donald Ornitz, a great photo journalist I knew in the army, said, 'Why don't you shoot broads?' And I said, 'I don't know anything about that.' And he

said, 'What you lack in ability, you make up in enthusiasm.' (Laughs.) I had this... *thing* for big tits, see. And there were a lot of guys who felt the same way. The 9th Street Opera House, The Moulin Rouge, and Pete DeCenzie's place up on San Pablo. For the moment, I lose track of the name... but it's where he gave a number of strippers their start — Tempest Storm, ladies like that. Evelyn West and Her Treasure Chest, for example. So, on Ornitz' suggestion, I approached Evelyn and her old man. I said, 'Okay. I'll make you some prints.' This was the first time I took a whack at something like that. And I figured I'd get an erection, so I got me a jock strap. Put the jock strap on... but I didn't need it. I was so *intensely* interested in just taking the pictures, it was cool. And the pictures were used in magazines like *Playboy* and so on. But I've always been bold about this. I'll go up to any chick and approach 'em.

About being in a movie?

No. I don't go that way. I like to take some pictures of 'em. Never the movie. The movie is for some guy that's not really legit. I've never bullshitted anybody about being in a movie. I just want to take some pictures of 'em. And then, later on, if they qualify, you know, with the circumference and all, then I can talk about it. I'm not one who will snore somebody.



Wouldn't you say the Fifties were the heyday of the whole voluptuous woman, big-tit scene?
No, it's even more now... a little off the scale, of course.

So how do you feel about silicone jobs?

Silicone is not used anymore. Silicone is very dangerous, it gets into the bloodstream. No, they use the bags filled with a solution that's non-injurious. The medics have proven that it's fine. And I think it's great. When a girl is 80 years old, she's gonna have a great pair of tits. (Laughs.)

But some of these women, when they lay down on their backs, their breasts stand up as if they've still got a bra on. You like that?

Well, when it's done really well, it's very difficult to ascertain. The important thing is to get the bag anchored to the rib cage. Then the breasts are resilient. And they're

defying gravity at the same time.

I've read in various sources about a massive autobiography you've been working on.

It's finished. But I'm having trouble with the Chinese people. See, it's three volumes, has 2,500 photographs. The answer was for them to send all the proofs to me. But then they decided, because of the cost, that I should go to Hong Kong. So I balked at it. I could have, you know, held fast. But, yeah, it's a lot cheaper to print in Hong Kong. And all this is on heavy stock paper.

Are you co-writing it with someone?

No. It's all me. All mine. My pen name is Adolf Albion Schwartz. (Laughs.)

Where did you come up with that?

Well, I like Schwartz — and Adolf, as in Hitler. You're a good interviewer.

Thanks. Would you mind if we talk about some of your early films? *Common-law Cabin* for instance?

Common-law Cabin. Originally we came up with a loser title — 'How Much Loving Does a Normal Couple Need?' Too long. (Laughs.) No one understood it. So this grip was saying, 'Why don't you call it "Common-law Cabin"?' And it worked, 'cause, you know, I appeal to a lot of rednecks.

A lot of T.V. Mikels' early stuff also appealed to rednecks.

Yeah. He had stuff with Tura in the beginning. Tura's got some good stories about T.V. He liked to be jumped on by women with high heels.

So, how much influence would you say the burlesque houses had on you as a filmmaker?

Well, it was a good source of pussy. *Big-time* pussy. And I could shoot pictures of 'em. Mix the boat, do it together. Back then, Pete DeCenzie liked the idea of getting publicity. And I liked the idea of shooting. I had a good agent. Took photos, and they used the pictures frequently. So that's how I really got started. But it also gave me an opportunity to meet girls of my... taste. (Smiles.)

Girls who were open about sex?

Well, I've kinda got a nice, easy way of introducing the whole idea.

When would you say the art of burlesque died?

Hardcore films killed it. The good girls are doing it now in these clubs, particularly where rednecks are... you know, Indiana, Kentucky, Alabama, Carolinas and so forth... Oregon and Washington, even. You name it. The good girls make a lot of money. They make five, six, seven thousand dollars a week. But, more and more now, the hardcore girls are working. See, people like the whole idea of having a hardcore girl present herself. They've looked at her on cassettes, and they're enjoyed the thing with the one-armed reader, and all that.

One hand clapping.

Yeah. That's it. And they're pissin' off the girls with the giant tits. These hardcore girls have normal bodies, but they're known for 27 positions, plus six known only to the emperor.



Finders Keepers... Lovers Weepers

He's married to seven women I hear.

She's a big, tall woman that should be carrying a coiled whip. (Laughs.) He's a lively guy. And the woman is just... awesome.

Well, you've been married to some beauties, too — like Kitten Natividad.

Oh, she's a good friend, I wasn't married to her. We lived together for about three years. Without having known Kitten, my life would have been a much lesser experience. She's just a great lady. She enjoys an income from two of the videos. She was in *Beneath the Valley of the Ultra Vixens*. That was her number one. And prior to that she was in *Up!*, where she was the Greek chorus. But this woman married to T.V. Mikelis isn't necessarily a beauty. She looks like she should be the galley master — you know, the guy with the drum. (Laughs.)

Like a big-busted woman in an R. Crumb comic?

No, no. She's built like a hoe handle. Not my kind.

You also worked quite a bit with Utschi Digard.

Wonderful lady. She lives near me. We're good friends, I see her often.

Is there a big-titted woman that you've always wanted to work with?

Every one that comes along. (Laughs.)

What about another early film? Like *Mudhoney*?

Well, I did it more for carnal pleasure than anything else. Carnal greed. I brought over a German girl of... (smirks) spectacular proportions. And I shucked off my second wife and carried on with her. I was doing a film for another producer in Germany called *Fanny Hill*, with Marion Hopkins, famous actress. And I really made the film so I could have a reason to bring this German girl over and nest with her every night. It was very pleasurable. She's now with the Salai Lama.

How do you feel about people calling your films softcore?

Well, softcore is... they're like cartoons, fleshed-out characters. I used the word 'bustoons' for example.

***Up!* is a typical example of that sort of film.**

Yeah! That worked good. We shot that up in Miranda, up near Eureka.

I guess *Faster, Pussycat! KILL! KILL!* would be considered one of your most famous movies, though.

That is so strong... it was made 30 years ago and is now being re-released in theatres. We're going to open in New York with a big campaign and in Los Angeles. First-class theatres.

When *Faster, Pussycat!* first came out, did it do fairly well?

No. Didn't do well at all. A lot of people, a lot of distributors didn't understand that underlying thing about lesbianism. Most of them were Jewish, nice gentle women, that didn't understand that sort of thing. They couldn't visualise a man and a woman being together, although the film wasn't about that. It was just about two women, and you could read into it and say they 'cared' a lot for one another. William Rotsler did the original artwork for *Pussycat!*. Now we're making T-shirts with that same artwork. I wonder what happened to Rotsler? Is he still around?

***Psychotronic* interviewed him not too long ago. I think he's doing X-rated video reviews for *Adam Magazine*. What about Tura Satana? Are you still in touch with her?**

Yeah. She and I went over to Paris about eight months ago to re-release *Faster, Pussycat!* on video. Went over like gangbusters. But, see, I hope to do *Pussycat!* again — remake it exactly like it was. Same dialogue, same angles. Just shoot it in colour. If you'd like to come up to the *Pussycat!* thing, we're going to do that in the early spring. And we're going to go to the same location, same dialogue, same angles. And we're gonna call it, 'Kill, Kill, *Pussycat!* Faster! Faster!'

That'd be great. Thanks.

Sure. I have a new girl to play Tura's original part. Tura will work as a technical aid to me. This new girl has really impressive credentials. I shot her down in the Sultan Sea for German *Playboy* (In a semi whisper) And they go for gals with giant tits over there. Christy, Hefner's daughter, just doesn't like big-titted women. When the thing came out, I called Roger (Ebert) and said, 'Get a goddamn copy and look at it.' (Aside) He loves big tits, see. And Roger said, 'It's strange, but I'm going to a dinner that Christy Hefner's throwing for me and Siskel.' I said, 'Take it along, fer crissakes.' So he brought it along, handed it to Christy, and she said, (grimaces) 'Oh, this is just awful. It's embarrassing. It's crap!' But what can you do? She's the editor for *Playboy* now. It's not Hef anymore. She's it. I used to do a lot of stuff for *Playboy* when Hefner was there, the early days.

How was he back then?

Total guy. Everything together. He did everything. I did the sixth *Playmate* with my wife Eve who came from Frisco. Yeah, I see him now and then. I'm occasionally invited to his place. We have interesting chats. He's a very loyal person to the past. Women can't wear low-cut gowns in his mansion, though, in deference to his wife. I go there with June Wilkinson occasionally. June's a girl I shot, discovered her, with huge tits and so on. Still looks incredible. But Hef always says, 'I wish you'd... uh... bring it together, there, June.' Well, his old lady probably half says. It's just that, you know, Hef's out of it now.

What about Dave Friedman? You guys still in touch?

Oh... the Sultan of Smut. (Laughs.) That's the title given to him. Call me anything, but don't call me late for lunch. (Laughs.) Yeah, we're great friends. I used him as an

expert witness with Edy Williams, the girl I married when I was at Fox. It's always right for a producer to marry a starlet. She was perfect — perfect for the role. She was just great. Ended up suing me, tried to get into my wallet. And Friedman was an expert witness that the lawyer brought in. We had a Ronald Reagan appointee judge, who'd been an ex-lieutenant commander. Very serious. Not something he was accustomed to. He asked me, 'Would you run through the titles of your films?' And I said (very Ringling-like) 'Lorna, Mudhoney, *Faster, Pussycat!* Kill Kill Kill, Wild Gals...' And he said, 'Wait. Wait. That's all right.' Well, anyway, Edy went in there with wet T-shirts, and the judge would throw her out.

What kind of statement was she trying to make with a wet T-shirt in a courtroom?

Well, she really lost the fight when she started going in there and doing her own kind of PR. And she kept firing her lawyer, see? But Edy's all right. We're friends now. She's a sexual powerhouse at any given time. Any given time.

Do you write most of the stories for your films?

I write the ideas.

And then you get together with the screenwriter?

By and large, yeah.

Sort of like what Buñuel did with Jean-Claude Carrière.

Well, mine are more... kind of fun, you know. Big bosoms and square jaws. (Laughs.) I do all this narrative. I do my own (Smiles) very serious narration, see. (From the breast pocket of his leather jacket, pulls out rumpled paper with hand-written script) This is for the new documentary. And I do it with proper concern. I'll read it to you. 'Cross the bay, book-ended by two spectacular bridges, lies Tony Bennett's San Francisco — Meyer's start in the business world. US Army engineers as an underoperator mimeograph. Following World War II, enter Gene K. Walker Productions — industrial documentaries. The influence readily recognised in Russ' post-war filmic catalogue.' Always said with serious concern. And, every now and then, we intercut with a naked girl. Now here's one: 'The East Bay, at one time a charming, metro suburban entity. A conventional downtown. Languorous Lake Merritt. The fony tube, access to adjacent Alameda. The Bay Bridge to Frisco. Now, a conglomeration of ethnic-isms.' (Laughs.)

How close do you stick with your scripts?

Right to the script. Everything, right there.

Storyboards?

No. (Points to head) All in the head. (Clicks tongue) That's it. I know what I'm going to do.

What about contemporary filmmakers? Any favourites?

The question arises... there are so many good ones. I'm in a thing by myself... All these guys, by and large, or girls, are good directors. They have big crews. The

HEADPRESS

difference is, I work with five or six people.

Why do you think your films have such a great cult following?

It's not cult. I don't like the term. *They-just-like-the-damn-movies*. They come in great numbers. That's all. And when there's a festival of my films, I get up there and talk. Had one in Olympia — 6,000 people in the theatre. Went to Moscow recently for one of my film festivals. They showed three films and it went over well. I took Melissa Mounds with her giant jugs and she was just... *thunderous* over there. She'd get up on the stage, dance, and I'd tell her, 'Now don't take your clothes off, or we're gonna make Siberia.' (Laughs.)

In the late Seventies, you were going to do a documentary on the Sex Pistols. Would you mind talking about that project?

Well, that took place just after *Beneath the Valley of the Ultravixens*. Ebert and I went to England in 1979 to do a film on the Sex Pistols. He wrote the screenplay. But, as it ended up, Malcolm McLaren didn't have enough money. And it was a *terrible* blow. That's why I really got away from making films. We were so incensed. Kitten was over there. She was going to be in it. She brought solace and succour to me every night. That was worthwhile. You need someone like that, because you run into all these terrible production problems with people that don't know what they're doing, and it's great to have a woman to get you over the night.



Mr. Bosomania

Photo Anthony Petkovich © San Leandro Times

Were you interested in the punk scene at the time?

You know, I really don't care what I do. If it's something with Seabiscuit the horse, I'll make a film. I mean, I won't make a porno movie. I won't show the open-faced oyster — the big plunging and bubbling and frothing and all that. No, I won't do that. My sex is... gargantuan. It's more like... dealing with some *catastrophic* event. Something bigger than life. Like a construction foreman trying to get together the basic foundation of the Empire State Building. Massive efforts are being made. A lot of running and noise. Shrieking and yelling. An orgasm is never easy. It's *thunderous*. And it might be accompanied by sound effects from an anvil with a big sledge hammer, you know. Everything is bigger than life, louder. And people enjoy it, dig it.

But the control is humour.

Satirical humour. Right.

Were you ever influenced by any satirical writers?

No, I'm not looked upon in the Hollywood industry as a great fucking artist. In fact, there's more put-down.

Why is that? Because you're not part of the mainstream?

Yeah! See, when I went and did the mainstream with Fox, I made two pictures. One was a hellish success, *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*. The other one was based upon a book, Irving Wallace's best-seller, *The Seven Minutes*. One made a ton of money. In fact, I own 10 percent of the film. And after 22 years, I got a cheque for \$75,000. I dare say how many directors have gotten their cut after 22 years. But the people, and particularly Valenti, were so abhorred by me coming in there and making an X-rated film. I made the first X-rated film. Now *Dolls* has got such a following, it was recently voted in a *Rock* magazine as the No.1 *Rock* movie of all time. Ebert sent it to me, and I was thrilled to get it.

Is there a dream movie which you still haven't made yet?

Oh, I've made that many films, you know. But I'd like to make a film called 'Up the Valley of the Beyond'. Ebert wrote it. It's a marvellous film. Another one is 'The Bra of God'.

The Bra of God?

Yeah.

Great title. What's it about?

Well, in 1975 I did a film called *Super Vixens* that grossed around 17 million bucks. Very successful. Charles Napier — six more teeth than Burt Lancaster — was in it. He's the judge in the AIDS film, *Philadelphia*. Square jaw.

He was in *Silence of the Lambs*, too, wasn't he?

Cop who had his throat torn out?

Yeah. He does a lot of films for Demme now.

That's it. Demme uses him a lot. But 'The Bra of God' was specifically written by Ebert to have Napier in it. It was like a follow through on *Super Vixens*. And it had

to do with this... *bizarre* location. When the story opens, everything's grey. The sky is grey, the water's grey, the sand's grey, the wood's grey. And Napier arrives on the scene. He sees this shack in the distance. So, he goes up to it, opens the door, and a *blast* of light comes out. Huge light. Goes in and there's an incredible set, all white. A computer bank and so forth. And here's this woman that looks like... Margaret Dumont, from the Fields films. Remember Margaret Dumont? Very proud woman. And in the film she's the wife of God. She says, 'God's off today. Who are you?' He says, 'My name is so-and-so.' She says, 'My God. A terrible mistake has occurred. You were supposed to go to Purgatory and you are here. Something broke down in the system. I'll tell you what we can do... if you go back to Purgatory and show that you have the ability to go straight and be a nice guy...' And, see, he's watching her all this time and, he's got all these teeth. He says, 'Okay. I'll take it. Thirty days.' He gets out, gets into a speed boat (aside: it's conveniently placed there, of course), tears off, and yells: 'In a pig's ass!' And he goes off, and he just does the same old shit he's always done in *Super Vixens* — beating the hell out of women, killing 'em, throwing 'em off bridges, beating the hell out of their husbands, and so forth. That was it. Napier did it in *The Seven Minutes*, too. But Napier couldn't do it because his wife objected. It was his eighth wife or something... She said, 'No more. You can't play with those big women.' So we never made it. And the other one we proposed with

Napier was going to be 'Up the Valley of the Beyond'. It was about an Elvis Presley guy who couldn't get it up anymore. And a doctor — a Nazi scientist, of course — has discovered a certain solution by *extracting* it from the testicles of a beaver. Ebert and I would sit there and laugh as we wrote this. So here he is being chased by an Israeli commando who wants to bring him to task, ya see. (Laughs.) We had the character of Howard Hughes in it, because Howard Hughes could stand a rejuvenation, too. I wanted to use Leslie Nielsen to play Howard Hughes. (Shakes his head sadly.) It was set. Jesus Christ. We just couldn't get the goddamn money. And it all takes place on an island in the Caribbean. Yeah. Great thing.

What about Donald Trump? Think he'd back it?

Nah. (Laughs.) They don't understand that, see. That's why they get afraid of me. 'Oh, we're gonna let him go and he's just gonna run amuck.'

It seems like many of the people who've starred in your films were more or less discovered by you.

By and large, I like to work with new people. Find somebody on the street.

Real people.

Well... no... *bizarre*. (Laughs.) Really *bizarre* kinds of people.



Russ, two dolls from *Beyond the Valley of the...* & Hugh Hefner

You stand on the corner of Market and 6th and you'll find all you need.

No, but you gotta have some ability. And a little crazed, you know what I mean?

Like Stuart Lancaster in *Pussycat!* Or Napier in *Super Vixens*.

Lancaster was good at that. Poor Stuart recently had a stroke. I read an interview with him recently in *Psychotronic*. Napier has seven more teeth than Burt Lancaster had. (Laughs.) He's great. That bathtub stompin' scene was just... (Smiles, proudly shakes his head.) *Bosomania* — it's the only way to go... See, I'm in that weird area. I get enough people saying to me, 'Well, you do porno, don't you?' I don't. I don't know what the fuck it means. Valenti thinks I'm a pornographer. But I might say to Valenti, 'I'm a high-class pornographer.' See, when you say 'por-noooooo', by nature your mouth droops. 'Por-noooooo...' But the other way is to say 'por-nografeeeee...' See? There's a smile there.

You're right. Hey, listen, thanks for the interview.

(Shakes hands.) You're welcome. I enjoyed it. Good interview. It came out real easy — like come. (Laughs.)

Special thanks to Lou Filpovich. Thanks also to Daniel Pryfogle and Derek Johnston.

LETTERS

HEADPRESS, PO BOX 160, STOCKPORT, CHESHIRE, SK1 4ET, UK.

AS FOR a book certification scheme [discussed in the last issue's letters pages], the main thing not in its favour is that it'd simply be impractical. With over 80,000 books published in the UK per annum along with innumerable mags, pamphlets etc., it'd require an organisation in size comparable to the existing civil service.

I was glad your book *Critical Vision* had a fair proportion of new material... Maybe you've realised this already, but the reason Disney wouldn't care about the Snow White strip (mentioned p.28) is that they don't have any rights over fairy tale material, only their own creations — Mickey Mouse, Dumbo, etc.

Douglas Baptie, Scotland

The late comic artist Wally Wood may have had nothing to fear with his *Adult* parody of the fairy tale character, but the possible contention arises from the fact that he based his Snow White unequivocally upon Disney's version: her looks, her dress, the style etc... For readers in the dark, rush out and buy *Critical Vision*

I THOUGHT that Jennifer Blowdryer's visit to Amsterdam [*Headpress 11* — Eds] was great, some of the most subtly cutting writing I've read in a long time. I'm now sorry that I missed her at the Smut Fest. You ought to get more female writers on board (though I think you have established quite an impressive array of staff writers as it is, so I won't hold it against you too much!). I also liked the Bibliomania piece... I have always been aware of the 'seedier' side to the Holy Book but this is the first time I have ever seen the subject dissected so thoroughly. An astoundingly researched piece from Whitechapel, as always. My only criticism is the irregularity of your mag. Okay, I won't waste any more of your time. Keep up the good work.

J. Manning, Bristol

Thank you for the kind words. The regularity of the mag is something which has since been improved — and something we hope to maintain... It

has always been our intention to pull together informative and entertaining material from a wide variety of fine writers, female or otherwise. Previous experience is not a requisite.

DEAR FRIENDS of bad taste: In Switzerland our *non-budget-video* Blutgeil had the dubious privilege of being chosen by [the] state's attorneys as a "*pilot case*" for Article 135 of the Swiss criminal law.

Established 1990 despite public resistance by artists fearing *political abuse* because of its woolly phrases, this article prohibits "*portrayal of*

violence capable to violate the human dignity of the viewer and without having a desirable scientific or cultural value".

Since the state's attorneys in all the years since 1990 didn't have the guts to start proceedings against a *commercial company* with money and lawyers behind them, they immediately lodged an appeal when our video was *ruled free* by the district-court last year, declaring their *urgent need for a precedent of article 135* and that for this they're willing to go to the very last court no matter what price.



Panel from Wally Wood's *So White and the Six Dorks*

The next court ruled us *guilty* and [ordered] the video to be destroyed. We now have to pay *fines and costs of over US \$20,000*. Since we don't have that money, we'll all probably have to go to jail for a month.

We still believe the most effective weapon against censorship is information and not letting them get away without anybody noticing it. If you know other addresses and contacts which might be of interest for us, let us know. We'll probably need them badly if sometime we are forced to go [into] permanent exile.

Matthias Bühner & Roger Schmid
SSI, PO Box 3252, CH-8031 Zürich,
Switzerland

The film Blutgeil (Zürich Cop Eaters IV) was reviewed in Headpress 11. To quickly reiterate, two cops act on a tip-off and raid a squat in search of a terrorist, only to be mutilated, murdered and cannibalised. The film is gory and very cheap, a supposed block comedy. Included with the above missive was a second video, documenting the plight of SSI with monologues and back-projected news clips taken from Swiss TV.

I USED autopsy footage in a degree film and was visited by the vice squad following a public complaint to police... It was June 1993 at the Metro Cinema Derby. The place was crowded (the photography degree show was also on the go in the same building). The film/video programme was made up of around 20 shorts of different genres. If I remember correctly, my video *Erogenous Video-Zone* (porno clips, altered for educational purposes only) was first. With a pounding soundtrack and erections/penetrations etc. it was a good opener! One other video (*Skin Flick*) and a 16mm film (*Deceased Film*) dealing with death, decay and autopsy, were also shown, and it seems one member of the audience took offence to all three and decided to go straight to the cop-shop. The next day there was a call from reception to the film department, it was two vice officers! One technician and the cinema projectionist went down to sort it out. The officers were soon on their way as the original complaint was concerning a "hard-core porno snuff movie" that I had made??? It seems the outraged person (a "she", I later

found out) had not mentioned this was a showcase of student films, nor had she mentioned they were short films... just one long depraved feature! I must admit we told a few white lies concerning the content of *Skin Flick*, as one of the officers said that the screening would be illegal if it showed any full-length shots of the person during autopsy. He was told it was made up of close-ups... a lie! The lecturers at the University still do not know of this incident as we feared it may induce censorship of future shows. It shows just how frantic the authorities are concerning film material: over 200 people saw that same film degree show... but it took only one complaint.

David Greenall, Manchester

I'M AFRAID you've been duped by some sad pervert. The letter credited to Stewart Home in *Headpress 11* wasn't written by me. It seems that a lot of people have taken to signing texts in my name, but I'm not responsible for any of the articles in the *Smile* magazine issued by Academy 23, or a number of other items that have been credited to me. If you think about it, you'll realise that I couldn't possibly have written a letter claiming that I wank over pictures of female models in mail order catalogues, since as

anyone who knows me will confirm, I only wank over seeing my own name in print. In fact, this has caused me a bit of a problem, since I was banking on having a mint run of *Headpress* to sell off to some collector to see me through me dotage. Unfortunately, what with the fake letter and the review of my book *Cranked Up Really High* both being in the same issue, my copy has become somewhat sticky. *Headpress* is so popular that it has sold out in all the London shops, so I have been unable to replace my badly stained edition. Therefore, I would appreciate it if you could mail me, in a plain brown wrapper please, a fresh copy of issue 11 to make up for the way in which the fake letter you inadvertently published has damaged my reputation.

Stewart Home, London

Well, Stewart, what fools we've been. We thought all that crusty slopy stuff was Home made jism (see letters page in last issue if this makes no sense) not the counterfeit cum it now appears to be. So that blows our planned Celebrity Semen Sample competition in which the said soiled catalogue page was going to be the big prize. Looks like we'll have to give away the dried-up, well-clotted tampon that Rose West sent us

NO GOOD AT PING PONG?



THEN WHY NOT CONTRIBUTE TO HEADPRESS
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Our doors are always open to letters, ideas, suggestions, reviews, artwork, material... Contact the editorial address on the inside front cover.

ENTHUSIASM

and the production of out-of-the-body experience and related phenomena

Michael Ross

Carl Jung, in his book *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, quotes the following passage:

Albertus Magnus writes of Avicenna's *Liber Sextus Naturalium* which says that a certain power to alter things dwells in the human soul particularly when she is swept into a great excess of love or hate or the like...

When, therefore, the soul of a man falls into a great excess of any passion, it can be proved, by experiment, that it binds things magically and alters them in the way it wants...

Thus it is the soul who desires a thing more intense, who makes things more effective and more like what comes forth... such is the manner of production with everything the soul intensely desires...

I find this passage a particularly exciting hypothesis and extremely relevant to the production of psychic phenomena, and in particular the out-of-the-body experience (OOTB). The fact that it appears in the work of Jung, who was obviously sympathetic to the reality and substantiality of unusual psychic events, warrants the closest attention.

Furthermore, Carl Jung wrote about his experience of out-of-the-

body phenomena in his *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, and there was no doubt in his mind that the experience was "real". A viewpoint which is highly relevant since we are all concerned with the veracity, reliability and status in the "real world" of psychic phenomena. Of course we have the fraught question of what we mean by "real". I'd like to leave the question of what we mean by "real" at one side for the moment.

Before going into any depth concerning the point-of-view of the passage I have just quoted, and its implications for psychical research, I would like to be more than a little bit autobiographical concerning my own particular interest — in fact what I readily admit is obsession — with out-of-the-body phenomena. I will describe this in detail since I think it helps explain why I find Avicenna's "magical view" particularly helpful for research into the paranormal.

Many of us remember the 1960s period. It was an exciting time culturally. There was definitely a relaxation from the more inhibited era of the Fifties. I don't know if every teenager at every age or era finds the dawning of teenage years quite so full of hope and positive attitudes concerning how things might change. However, I think I am correct in saying that a lot of people in the Sixties felt that there was a positive, hopeful sort of buzz around at the time. More importantly, there was also a great interest in all occult matters. We can remember the onset of a more widespread interest in Eastern religions and philosophies and all the paraphernalia of magic. In a sense it was a bit like excitable children being set free in a toy supermarket and told to help yourself. But a lot of tragic outcomes occurred because of this cultural explosion as people indulged themselves in various cults, drugs, promiscuity as the quick and usually expensive answer to the meaning of life.

Nevertheless, I'd like to concentrate on the positive aspect of this. There was definitely a very strong sense of enthusiasm for new ideas. An enthusiasm and openness to new experience. This, I think, was very common at that time. As far as I was concerned one of the most interesting books I read was Sylvan Muldoon's *The Projection of the Astral Body*. I'd had a few minor psychic experiences prior to this, so was predisposed to believe that one could in fact project the soul out of the physical body before death and view the physical world with a duplicate soul body. I did, however, have an open mind concerning the subject. My frame of mind was, "how interesting... it would be nice to have an experience of this," but I did not actually set out to employ any of the methods Muldoon advised to enable one to project out of the body.

However, one morning when I was 17, I had woken up early and put on the bedside light. I settled back and closed my eyes intending to snooze before getting up. I distinctly recall a terrific sense of comfort and relaxation. I had no thoughts about Muldoon's book or astral projection. Suddenly, I felt myself shoot out of my body and wobble as I rose towards the ceiling. I opened my eyes and saw myself lying on the bed with my physical eyes closed. I panicked and said to myself "get back... get back!" I shot back into my body the way I had left it. I was tremendously excited. I couldn't believe my luck. There was no doubt in my mind that I had experienced the out-of-

the-body phenomena so expertly described by Muldoon and others.

I had definitely perceived the external world of my bedroom. The bed and my physical body looked as I would have expected from a birds-eye-view as it were. The first thing I did was to write to the Institute of Psychophysical Research in Oxford (this was around 1967) describing my experience and asking them if they would be willing to set up a target in Oxford which I would attempt to locate via an astral projection. The term 'remote viewing' was not then in vogue. They were willing to do this, and I attempted to achieve the proof that the soul did indeed exist and could function independently of the physical frame. Proof of the afterlife would then follow. The world would then become a better place since I, thanks to good luck, expertise in the production of out-of-the-body phenomena, and having a particularly wonderful attitude concerning the spiritual welfare of my fellow human beings, would be able to prove this experimentally. I set to the task with great vigour and intensity.

I tried various methods which Muldoon and Fox and Yram had outlined. I envisaged that it was more than likely that I would have a vivid dream whereby a five digit target would appear. This experimentation happened over a period of three years. I did indeed have a few more experiences of astral projections, but they were never so vivid and exciting as the first. For example, I would find myself floating up towards the ceiling of my bedroom. I would have quite a lot of cataleptic sensations on waking up and slight floating sensations. I would have an awful lot of vivid dreams and experiences of dual-consciousness whereby I had the sense of lying on my bed but nevertheless feeling that I was conscious also up near the ceiling. This was, as Muldoon and others have pointed out, a very strange experience. I'd also experience interesting hypnagogic imagery before falling asleep. All the sorts of things that Muldoon in particular so brilliantly described.

But what about my

experiments with the Institute of Psychophysical Research, headed by Celia Green in Oxford?

Well, I did have a few dreams whereby I perceived a five digit number and one exceptionally vivid dream whereby I was down in Oxford (which I had never visited physically) and in which I felt that I was going to a room where the target was. But I didn't get the number. What's more, despite many targets being set up, they were changed each time I responded. I had no significant success.

The report I got from the supervisor of these experiments was that they were slightly significant and that he was keen that I continue. But frankly I was bored with the lack of success and I stopped the experiments. I have no idea to this day what he meant by stating that the results were 'slightly significant'. Perhaps the results were slightly above chance. Recently I wrote the Institute asking for the data but they didn't have it any longer, which surprised me since I'd have thought they would keep all test results.

Now, the crucial term I have used describing participation in the experiments is 'bored'. I was bored by attempting to get this target and not being successful. I was not experiencing the same excitement when out-of-the-body phenomena (not quite so vivid as the first) occurred. I think this attitude is particularly relevant in the inhibition of ESP phenomena.

I wrote an article which was published, entitled 'Search for a Soul' which described my experiences with such laboratory experimentation. I was very critical. I said in no uncertain terms that it was all the fault of the laboratories and their methodology. Their ruthless objectivity inhibited the phenomena. Wires and machines spoiled the atmosphere of such sensitive scientific wallflowers as myself.

I even went to the extent of getting a tabloid newspaper to provide a hypnotist to put me under so I could get a target in the next room. The photographer was there to record the event for posterity. Alas, the poor chap couldn't get me under! I resisted all attempts. No Edgar Cayce me! Was my subconscious telling me something, I wonder? In my own defence I will admit that I am a bit of an awkward sod, and don't like being dominated or bossed around, so that it was likely that the experiment was doomed at the outset.

The headlines in a sex-and-sin tabloid, 'ABERDEEN MAN PROVES IMMORTALITY', were then, alas, not for me.

Around this time Edinburgh University were doing experiments in the Ganzfeld technique. I felt quite sympathetic to this type of experimentation. The psychologist Ernest Hilgard in the United States had written about ESP in one of his very good text books. I wrote to him suggesting that in particular telepathy would be more easily facilitated by bombarding the senses with the message to be conveyed by the sender. For example, the subject transferring the image of, say, a triangle would be more able to do so if an audio tape was playing in his ear constantly repeating the word 'triangle' and he wore goggles incessantly flashing pictures of a triangle. His fingers would at the same time be clutching a triangular shape. A particularly attractive masseuse caressing his body with triangular shaped gloves might be an added assistance. I feel that the message would pass on without lapses of concentration on the part of the subject who was being thus bombarded. Then again, maybe not!

So I felt that this method whereby your eyes were covered with ping pong balls and white noise being passed through your ears might be a good method to employ in my own case.

Again I have to report abject failure. It didn't work for me and consequently I was predisposed to think that any form of laboratory experimentation would, in my case and likely in all such cases, be bound to fail.

Or was my subconscious using this vehement point-of-view as an excuse?

At the time I was studying Mental Philosophy at Aberdeen University and picked all the philosophy options I could possibly fit into a four years course. I chose Philosophy because at least that subject had the advantage of

exploring at great length the possibility of dualism whereby the mind or soul was distinct from its physical counterpart.

I did some psychology also, and was bias against most of the materialistic ideas on which it was based. I recall the excellent professor the late John Symons discussing phantom pains during one of his lectures at the psychology department. Naturally, he indicated a neurological explanation for these sensations whereby soldiers with amputated limbs experienced the feeling that their absent arms or legs were, in fact, still present.

I had a lengthy discussion with him after his lecture to protest that he had not considered the alternative point of view that there could be a phantom body, astral body or soul, which was the container of such sensations and that the soldiers etc. really did experience pains in their 'soul bodies'.

He was, as I realised much later, extremely courteous and objective and patient with someone who had all the passion of a fanatic concerning his point of view.

Shortly afterwards, John Beloff gave a talk at the University and John Symons introduced me to him. I discussed my experiences of the out-of-the-body phenomena but was, curiously, put off by the comment made by Mr Beloff that 'we could not afford to lose a subject like yourself', or something to that effect. I determined there and then that I would have absolutely nothing further to do with any form of psychological testing of OOTB phenomena. I had no intention of being a subject for anybody's experiment.

Now, I must apologise for having gone into this in such subjective depth but I feel that it is very revealing in many ways.

At the outset, on first experiencing the phenomena, it was definitely like a Paul on the Damascus road experience as far as I was concerned. I literally was ecstatic and felt that the answer to the riddle of life had been fortuitously provided to yours truly.

I was tremendously keen to share this with suffering humanity in order to alleviate their worries concerning the ultimate questions: Is there a soul? Is there a spiritual background to existence? The fact that I had experienced an astral projection was tremendous subjective proof, and I was geared up to provide the objective proof which I had no reason to assume would be too difficult.

I recall reading something at the time about a girl student doing a PhD on OOTB phenomena. I was envious that I was not then in the position of Susan Blackmore who in fact was that student in contributing to this fascinating topic.

So at this time there was very much an enthusiasm, an excitement, an ecstatic feeling which permeated my thoughts on the matter. To repeat, it was a Paul on the Damascus road type of thing. I would assume that her own thrilling experience of the phenomena motivated Susan Blackmore to devote her time to it likewise.

Colin Wilson, the noted populariser of occult themes, has written many times about ESP and related topics. I wrote to him concerning his Faculty X whereby he maintained that everyone has the capacity to develop such powers if they can tap into this faculty. I suggested to him that I found that "enthusiasm" seemed to be a factor which facilitated it. He explained that he had been thinking along similar lines and that it very much mirrored his own informal research.

I began to reflect that this feeling of ecstasy is usually present in Saints, visionaries who levitate, bilocate, see the Virgin Mary, converse with Christ, commune with God and so on.

Needless to point out that the Greek word "ecstasis" means "standing outside oneself". This, on first realising the derivation, was a source of considerable excitement to me. The popular notion of ecstasy is that the Saint has some sort of internal rapture or overwhelming sense of joy. Note that it is always generally perceived as an internal thing. Whereas, not for the first time, the Greeks were literally correct: ecstasy does mean that you are outside yourself. You are having an out-of-the-body experience! We stupidly had, over the centuries, lost all the literal meaning of the word and lost the sense completely. The Greeks meant that you were in an ecstatic state when you were in fact out of your physical body.

This provided me with satisfactory linguistic proof that a sense of excitement, joy, enthusiasm, exaltation of almost orgasmic proportions could certainly be a great help in order to provide out-of-the-body phenomena and allied ESP experience.

So it all, linguistically and philosophically, fell into place for me.

But then a few doubts crept in. I had read Susan Blackmore's book **Beyond the Body** but merely treated it as a scandalous, though subtle, debunking exercise. I far preferred reading the positive tones I had in a collection of almost 80 volumes on astral projection which I had collected over the years.

Without discussing Susan's arguments in length suffice to say I began to appreciate, despite myself, the eminently objective and sympathetic manner in which she discussed the phenomena of astral projection. Having experienced it herself after smoking marijuana whilst being exhausted she noted afterwards that her perception of the exterior world had been faulty during her OOTB trip. For example the colour of the tiles on the roof of the houses she floated over were different in the light of day when she perceived them in her physical body. Oliver Fox discussed the same sort of thing regarding the direction pavement stones had appeared during a flight out of his body.

She has the added advantage of exploring at great length the major sensation of all who experience such a thing, which is: "But it WAS real... I would swear on a stack of Bibles that what I experienced was real". Susan Blackmore tries to account for that particular feeling we all have had on experiencing such phenomena. Without going into great depth, I find her description of the need for the brain to keep intact the body image being "here, now and in the same place" quite an appealing way of getting round

the problem of explaining this great sense of "but I was REALLY out of my body". The brain cannot cope with a sense of disorientation so it quickly adapts to the situation by providing a satisfactory sensation of being out of the body which as Susan would maintain, although seeming to be real, is illusory.

What also appealed was her patient addressing of all possible courts of appeal concerning OOTB phenomena. I began to see, and I should have done so much earlier being a philosophy student, that it really was illogical for God, the Universe or Whatever to create two separate bodies to perceive an external world. It just did not make sense to see the need for two physical eyes having two astral eyes in a phantom type body to look out at the same objects in the real world.

Besides, I had not been able to provide any satisfactory proof that I could exist outside my body. The only reputed successful effort to read a five digit number target had been done by Charles Tart about 20 years ago but now it is discredited because the laboratory situation wasn't tight enough and I wouldn't accept the one direct hit as satisfactory myself in any case. And not one medium, magician or modern Christian or whatever-mystic has ever come forward to show off their talents under proper scientific conditions. I find Uri Geller's attitude to these problems quite interesting. He, too, seems to be unwilling to provide contemporary proof. What surprises me is that the Nine who rule the Universe and who are allegedly in touch with him likewise are not taking the very simple road to proof of spiritual things by allowing their subject, our Uri, to provide, one, just one experiment to show that he can do all these alleged miraculous things.

The problem for me personally at any case is that I still believe that I 'really' was out of my body. I can accept that it is illogical to have a phantom body perceiving the real physical world. I have to fall back on the well-used Shakespearean phrase that there are more things in Heaven and

Earth than are dreamt of in our philosophies and interpretations of psychical data. Now what is the way out of this impasse?

I think that the passage I quoted out of Jung referring to Avicenna's system of Magic is a possible solution.

This notion of whipping up the excitement in order to produce the phenomena. We might have to attempt to take on the mantle of being modern day dervishes and ecstasies and whip up Bacchalean excesses! "Knocked out" takes on a whole new significance!

I would make the serious point that we ought to take on board the notion of producing an excitement and enthusiasm prior to experimenting with any form of ESP in the laboratory. This is a progression on the sheep and goats hypothesis well worth making, I feel.

If we could somehow create the excitable conditions prior to laboratory experiments then it is quite possible that we would be able to provide a breakthrough into finally providing the elusive proof for ESP phenomena.

Sylvan Muldoon, in the book *The Projection of the Astral Body*, states, and I quote, "One of the strongest aids to projection of the astral body is 'realisation of astral body phenomena', that is, an understanding of the true facts, of the actions of the astral body, the causes for these actions etc. These must be firmly fixed in the mind." He goes on to say "Read about the phenomena, think of the phenomena, and practise the phenomena intense, if you would become a projector. Root an understanding of the phenomena in your mind so deeply that it becomes a part of your life. Become so bound up in the study of astral projection that you will become almost irritable if you are interrupted when thinking and studying and learning about it."

Muldoon maintains that this creates a stress in the subconscious which eventually will lead to a successful OOTB experience. Apparently Muldoon's capacity to astral project ceased when he got married. It could be that he grew bored with the phenomena. It's a matter of regret to me that I did not get in touch with him when he was alive.

I would have loved to ask him the following questions. How come you stopped having OOTB experiences? Did you finally get bored with it all? Why did it not occur to you and your eminent psychical researcher friend Hereward Carrington to do a simple experiment which would have proved to the world what you could do i.e. set up a target in another room and get it via astral projection? Was it not a lukewarm sort of cop out to state that the only satisfactory proof would be if you experienced it oneself after utilising your methods?

In conclusion I would like to quote again from a book. This time it is a piece entitled *The Immortality of the Soul* by the Cambridge Platonist and corresponding chum of Descartes Henry More who wrote in the 16th Century, "But no man can when he pleases pass out of his body thus, by the Imperium of his Will no more than he can walk in his Sleep; For this capacity pressed down more deep into the lower life of the Soul, whither neither the Liberty of the Will nor Free Imagination can reach. Passion is more likely to take effect in this case then either of the other two powers the seat of the Passions being originally in the Heart which is the chief fort of these lower Faculties, and therefore by their propinquity can more easily act upon the first Principles of Vital Union. The effect of these has been so great, that they have quite carried the soul out of the body, as appears in sundry histories of that kind... Now of all Passions whatever, excess of Desire is fittest for this more harmless and momentary ablegation of the Soul from the Body..."

Now I think that there are literally hundreds of sources I could quote from which make the same point as Henry More, Muldoon and Avicenna. It does seem to confirm the hypothesis that building up a sense of excitement could be a necessary precondition in the production of ESP phenomenon. On the other hand perhaps it has to be combined with a sense of deep, calm, contemplation whereby the physical body is put into a position whereby it can allow the soul or astral body to pass out.

It remains to be seen how we can combine these two methods in the laboratory to finally prove, without doubt, that the soul and ESP are real.

THE SONS OF GILLES DE RAIS

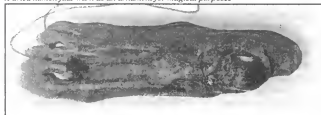
head-hunters, splanchnophiles & sorcerers

David Slater

Your body is a temple — or at least that's how the phrase goes. But what if your body, or a portion of it, became the centrepiece of someone else's house of worship?

Not just archaic superstition, but to this day parts of dead people are granted with strange mystical faculties. Church officials sincerely believe that the dried hand of a Saint has miraculous curing abilities. Likewise, witches believe the severed hand of a dead man used in a certain manner can bring about magical effect. The penis of Tutankhamun was one of the less-mentioned treasures to be stolen from his tomb, perhaps ground into an aphrodisiac snuff powder, or sleeved in a glass cylinder for use as a ritual dildo. Catholics regularly perform rites of symbolic necrophagy by consuming the 'flesh and blood' of a dead man. Practising Satanists perform similar cannibalistic ceremonies. Many Christian churches embody some human relic, whether it be phials of holy blood, the mummified remains of a Saint or, as purportedly secreted in one location, the shrivelled foreskin of Jesus. The shaved hair and cremation ash of executed serial killer Ted Bundy is reputed to have fetched a high price on the occult black market. The severed head, however, has particular arcane attraction. The desiccated head of Oliver Cromwell was placed on a spike at Westminster Hall before it was stolen in 1688. Similarly the head of the Marquis de Sade was stolen from Dr. Londe, a French phrenologist, around the middle of the 19th Century and is now believed to be located somewhere in England. Both were probably snatched for use in some occult ritual, or to be sold for that purpose to the highest bidder. But the severed head isn't necessarily a device of the black magician, for as many mummified heads adorn sanctified churches as skulls decorate wicked sorcerers' altars.

A dried human foot worn as an ornament for magical purposes



The head-hunting complex is an antediluvian custom enacted from the invention of the first stone cutting-tools, though not a distant practice reserved for the primitive jungle-dwelling tribes. Civilised evidence of it was found in Tejutepeque, El Salvador in 1984. Following an attack by rebels on government troops a medical team was sent in to retrieve the dead. One soldier was discovered with the entire skin of his head removed; the naked skull, complete with eyes, still attached to the shoulders. The face was not found at the scene.¹ The more recent ethnic wars in the former Yugoslavia have brought head-hunting into the cities of the 90s.



Contemporary urban head-hunter

Primitive head-hunters have various processing techniques: those who smoke or mummify the whole unmutated head; those who retain the flayed and preserved skin of the head; and those who keep the fleshless skull. The quickest method is that of smoking, a technique practised by the Kayans and Sea Dyaks of Borneo. After the brains have been drawn out through the nostrils with wooden spatulas, the tongue and eyes scooped out, and the hair removed for use in the decoration of shields and weapons, the heads are suspended over fires. The smoke and heat from the burning wood dehydrate and preserve the relic. This method causes the skin to shrink and tighten over the bone giving the head a long-dead appearance. Furthermore, it eliminates 'character' leaving all the heads with a similar appearance.

The head-shrinking practice, like that carried out by the Jivaro tribes, retains some facial resemblance of the victim. This process



Smoked heads of the Sea Dyaks

involves the removal of the entire skin of the head in a single piece. The skin is then boiled and treated with hot sand and stones until the required shrinkage is achieved. Unlike the Kayans, the Jivaros leave the hair on the scalp. The aim of the Jivaros is to create a miniature relic that is as lifelike as possible. The flesh of the head of the previously mentioned El Salvadorian soldier was probably subjected to this process and now resides somewhere as a *tsantsa*.²

Other head-hunters prefer to retain only the fleshless skull. The advantage in keeping the skull is that no special preservation technique is required; quite the opposite, decomposition of the soft tissues is essential. The Atayal tribe of Formosa, for instance, place the severed head on a tree-stump in the forest. The mouth is filled with grain to attract birds which will also peck at and consume the flesh. Micro-organisms and fungal corrosion provide the final thorough cleansing of the trophy. The resultant anonymous bleached skull loses any visual means of verifying identity of the victim. The clean skull is a relic preferred by the practising sorcerer of most cults.

The Templars worshipped a detached head, claimed by some members of the Order to be that of the original Grand Master. Whether the head was real or a manufactured image is not known. One account of its appearance describes it as being bearded and having two faces which, in essence, indicates some specially designed sculpture. On the other hand, the head may have been real, gross malformation being the reason for its deification in the first place. Teratology provides many instances of facial bifurcation and such a deformity could explain why one witness described it as "the face of a devil". All Templar lodges are said to have contained a genuine preserved head that was venerated by the retinue. Where these heads came from is not known. They may have belonged to previous members of significance, been stolen from graves, or severed from sacrificial victims.

Body-part collectors are not only found in human form. Probably the most prominent head-hunting deity is Kali, the fearful Hindu goddess. She is portrayed as a living mantle — the black skin cast off by the goddess Sakti — wearing a necklace of preserved heads and an apron of severed arms. She sometimes wears earrings of dead babies and her hands carry a sword and a

further detached head. Her domain is the graveyard or the battlefield where she paces amongst the mutilated remains of the dead, drinking blood and devouring entrails. Kali is the epitome of the Black Witch; the necromancer; the sorcerer.

The head and its contents have great occult significance; not only forming part of primitive superstition, but in contemporary myth and behaviour. The brain is often consumed as a means of ingesting the soul or *ts'o* of the deceased. In a troubled Africa of the 60s, Mau Mau hierarchy ritual necessitated the devouring of a white man's brain along with his pulverised wrist bones mixed with blood and excrement squeezed from his eviscerated bowels. Haitian voodoo witchdoctors obtain grease from the prised-out brains of disinterred corpses, which is applied to tools and weapons to imbue them with 'intelligence'. Mummified heads and decorated skulls are used as communication vessels by necromancers and sorcerers for foretelling the future. The fully preserved severed head is not only used as an oracle but often utilised as a sexual device by the person responsible for the victim's death. Gratification can be achieved by penetration of any accessible orifice like an open mouth, empty eye socket or exposed trachea. But most commonly mere handling or ogling the head during manual stimulation will suffice. This act is a form of worship whereby the user is in effect *sacralising* the relic, his semen having the same significance as Holy Water. Gilles de Rais, murderer, necrophile and sorcerer, is one of the earliest recorded examples of this type of head fetishist.

Rais, at his peak, was likely the wealthiest nobleman in Europe. In 1420, his fortune increased further when he married the opulent Catherine de Thouars. Protected by a 200-man army of bodyguard knights, he owned several estates and castles, and the maintenance of such spectacular extravagance began to erode his wealth. To counteract the ebb of his finances he began to sell off land and property. But this came to an abrupt end when his heirs, seeing what would be rightfully theirs dissipating, obtained an order from King Charles VII of France in 1436 preventing any further sales.

No longer able to sell property, Rais needed another method of stabilising his rapidly vanishing fortune. In his possession was a vast library of rare manuscripts, several relating to occult practices, and from these he learned of magical techniques for transmuting base metals into gold. Contemplating alchemy as a possible means of restoring his capital, Rais engaged the help and expertise of a priest named Gilles de Sille. However, despite his claims and self-professed abilities, the experiments conducted by Sille yielded only failure. But Rais persevered and squandered more of his wealth by employing an array of charlatans and bogus magi. Finally, he employed heretic Father Francesco Prelati of Florence, who, along with other twisted necromancers suggested to Rais that the way to success lay in sorcery.

A subterranean dungeon was prepared with signs, symbols and other occult paraphernalia in the bowels of

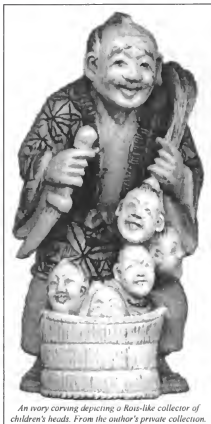
castle Tiffauges from where Prelati and Rais attempted to evoke demons. Again they achieved nothing and Rais, instead of dismissing Prelati as a cheat and impostor, allowed the sorcerer's tongue to persuade him success lay ahead. Prelati let it be known that the magical ingredients required for successful invocation were the blood, bones and various internal organs of children: sacraments no demon could resist.

The task of procuring the remains of children was a mandate very suited to Rais. His wealth had on many occasion purchased the use of a boy or girl to satisfy his erroneous carnal preferences. But copulation with a child wasn't Rais' only vice. For several years he had indulged in paedophilia culminating in murder. He would state at his trial, "I do not know why but I, myself, out of my own head without the advice of anyone, conceived the idea, of acting thus, solely for the pleasure and delectation of lust; in fact I found incomparable pleasure in it, doubtless at the instigation of the devil." But Rais also claimed that the idea came from an inherited book discovered in the library of a deceased relative:

"I found a Latin book on the lives and customs of the Roman Caesars by the learned historian called Suetonius; the said book was ornamented by pictures, very well painted, in which were seen the manners of these pagan emperors, and I read in this fine history how Tiberius, Caracalla, and other Caesars sported with children and took singular pleasure in martyring them. Upon which I desired to imitate the said Caesars and the same evening I began to do so following the pictures in the book." It is rather bizarre that a relatively stable man could be driven to lust-murder within hours of reading historical texts on the subject. Rais was probably attempting to divert blame from himself and direct it towards the devil and 'pornography' as killers continue to do to this day.

Prelati's advice now justified Rais' hitherto clandestine practice. If they were going to get children for sacrificial purposes, then Rais may as well obtain other uses from them beforehand.

Children were lured to the castle or simply kidnapped and dragged back to the towers by Rais' confidants and dedicated aids Henriët Griart and Etienne Corillaut. There, one at a time, the youngsters would be taken to Rais' room. Perhaps also present, observing from a corner, Prelati. Rais would talk to them calmly, assuring them. Only when he began to remove his clothes would they become uneasy. Pleas and cries



An ivory carving depicting a Rais-like collector of children's heads. From the author's private collection.

only stimulated Rais all the more and, naked, he would advance on the urchin. Their attention drawn to his pendulous organ, he would throw a noose around their necks and strangle them or suspend them from a peg fixed in the wall. This was done to render the child unconscious after which the ligature would be removed. When the child came round he or she, too, would be disrobed; beneath them the bed; above, petting and kissing, the naked Rais. Then, as Corillaut stated to the courts, Rais would "take his rod in his left or right hand, rub it so it became erect and sticking out, then place it between the thighs or legs of the said boys and girls..." Before long Rais would reapply the noose, turn over and sodomize the child regardless of gender, pulling them down on his shaft with the rope. During the act he would sometimes refrain from strangulation and cut into the child's throat. As the shocked victim slowly bled to death fear was transformed into muscular spasms, no more tangible than in the immature sphincter penetrated by Rais. Other times he would have an aide cut the head away totally, sawing rapidly

at the neck while Rais performed at the other end of the struggling body allowing tiny feet to pummel on his chest. For further variety he would cut a small hole through the stomach wall and insert his penis into the coils of intestines, or completely disembowel the child and wallow in the viscera. Another method involved him sitting on the stomach of the boy or girl and masturbating while his weight prevented the child drawing breath and eventually suffocated them; Rais likely striving to synchronise his orgasm — his 'little death' — with their expiration. Alternatively, he would beat his victim to death with a hefty wooden cudgel after which he would use the battered corpse for sexual gratification.

When the deeds were done, and Rais' proclivity purged, the carcasses would be thrown into the cellar of a disused tower. Any parts required for magical purposes would be removed before disposal of the corpse. Montague Summers, in *Witchcraft and Black Magic*, writes of the procedure following the killing of a 14-year-old boy by Rais:

When he had been outraged in the most horrible manner, Prelati wrapped the body in a linen sheet and under cover of darkness buried it in the cemetery of St. Vincent [but before burial] the blood was collected in phials and with it on virgin parchment...

they wrote out a grimoire and the liturgy of Satan

It was claimed at trial that Rais had used the hands, heart, eyes and blood of victims in the process of summoning demons. Such parts, particularly extracted from children or babies, have especial occult significance. The bones of the deceased were ground into powders by Prelati. In particular the finger bones and kneecaps were favoured, but for no other reason than being small and easy to work with. These powders were believed to have great ritualistic power.

But not all the sought-after parts were used in magical rites. Rais was keeping back remnants of his victims for his own personal use, perhaps as sexual fetishes or simply morbid memorabilia. As Rais had fought in battle alongside Joan of Arc and was a revered soldier, it is unlikely these heads were saved for the same reason a warrior would keep the skull of a defeated opponent. Helpless children hardly represent a challenging enemy or worthy foe. Because Rais had performed sexual acts with the children prior to their slaughter he probably felt some affinity with the remains. Etienne Corillaut claimed to have seen the severed heads of approximately 40 children and he stated that Rais would often remark on their beauty. Rais himself admitted of the dismembered bodies, "they were burned in my room except for a few handsome heads I kept as relics."

While all this horror was going on, there were those in power still hoping to buy up parts of Rais' estates. In September, 1440, Geoffroi le Ferron, the Treasurer of Brittany purchased St. Etienne de Malemort and sent his priest brother Jean le Ferron to claim the deed. The priest was assaulted and imprisoned by Rais and this not-too-serious crime initiated the legal proceedings which would publicly expose his nefarious activities.

Rais was brought to trial on numerous charges. His alleged crimes were dealt with separately, being divided between the Episcopal courts, the civil court, and the Inquisition. The Episcopal charges tackled Rais' assault and illegal imprisonment of Jean le Ferron; the civil court presided over charges of murder and sexual perversion against children; the Inquisition dealt with the crimes of invoking demons and heresy. As all three orders worked closely together there was no hope whatsoever for Rais escaping conviction.

The charge by the Inquisition concerning the invocation of demons claimed that

In a certain low room of the castle or fortress of Tiffauges... Monsieur Francesco Prelati, self-styled expert in the prohibited art of geomancy, and Jean de la Rivière, made many magic signs, circles, and characters. Also, in a certain wood near the said fortress of Tiffauges, Antoine de Palerne, of Lombardy, and one named Louis, with other magicians and conjurers of demons, practised divinations and summons to evil spirits, named Orion, Beelzebub, Satan, and Belial...

Charges that included sodomy and the sexual murder of children stated that

Gilles de Rais, [and others] accused, have taken innocent boys and girls, and inhumanely butchered, killed, dismembered, burned and otherwise tortured them, and the said Gilles, accused, has immolated the bodies of the said innocents to devils, invoked and sacrificed to evil spirits, and has foully committed the sin of sodomy with young boys and in other ways lusted against nature after young girls, spurning the natural way of copulation, while both the innocent boys and girls were alive or sometimes dead or even sometimes during their death throes.

Following extreme torture Rais confessed to all charges and on October 26, 1440 he was executed by strangulation. Also to die were Henriet Griart and Etienne Corillaut. However, Prelati, Rais' principal assistant and advocate, was erudite enough to somehow escape execution. He served just a few months in a prison cell despite evidently participating in the horrors for a full year.

Throughout the occult ceremonies Rais must have been aware that the rites were yielding nothing of substance: demons never appeared; base metals never transmuted into gold; the ebb of his wealth never ceased. Despite this abject failure he continued to perform the rituals because their very demands gave valid reasons and excuses for the continuation of the abuse, murder and dismemberment of children.

It is likely, to begin with, that Rais was satisfied with sexual use of the children alone, and their murder was a means of getting rid of the evidence. The killing would have been performed *post-coitus* by his aids. Later, strangulation would take place during the sexual act as a means of intensifying Rais' excitement and pleasure. When strangulation became too routine to provided the coveted rapture, he advanced to the dismemberment, evisceration and decapitation of the child *in coitus*. There was nothing to achieve beyond this point. Although Rais had been killing children many years before he was introduced to sorcery, with the commencement of the black rituals he became self-assured that the children were now dying for a greater reason than his own sexual depravity. In other words, he was no longer to blame; the devil was

It would be over 400 years before another extreme case would enter into the annals of criminal history. Evoking a supernatural ambience, Summers writes in *The Vampire in Europe*:

For many months various cemeteries in and around Paris had been the scenes of the most frightful profanations. The guardians of Pere la Chaise had noticed, or believed they had noticed, a shadowy figure flitting by night among the graves, but they could never succeed in laying hands on him and some began to suppose it was a phantom. Graves were found fearfully desecrated. The bodies were torn from their resting-places, violated and scored with hideous mutilations.

But no preternatural apparition was this. France was

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once again infected with a deranged sex maniac, in this case Sergeant Bertrand the necrophile. Although the lifestyle of Bertrand was in no way comparable to Rais' — the only similarity being both were 'soldiers' — they shared matching compulsions: necrophilia, and a predilection towards the dismemberment and evisceration of the human form for sexual motives. Unlike Rais, Bertrand did not commit murder; nor did he have any leanings toward homosexuality, or the aid of accomplices. Instead of killing, he disinterred the dead from their graves. Perhaps a moral decision; perhaps he felt murder too risky. He would strip the bodies of their shrouds, kiss them all over and consume the fermenting juices that seeped from the various orifices. He would masturbate over them, then rip the body apart with his bare hands or cleave them with a shovel. With one hand immersed in the corpse's rotting intestines he would ejaculate again before fleeing from the cemetery.

Bertrand claimed he began masturbating at the unusually-early age of eight. During this onanistic practice he would fantasize about being surrounded by naked women whom he would mutilate and murder. Again, unusually vivid and violent fantasies for one so young.

When he was 24 he killed a dog, slit open its belly, scooped out its intestines and masturbated amongst the tubery.³ A year later he indulged in his first true necrophilic act. He had been walking through a cemetery with a friend when he saw a partially filled grave. He continued the walk but shortly made excuses to leave then doubled back to the grave. Bertrand stated, "Under the stress of a terrific excitement I began to dig up the grave with a spade, forgetting that it was clear daylight and that I might be seen. When the corpse — a woman's — was exposed I was seized with an insane frenzy and, in the absence of any other instrument, I began to beat the corpse with the spade..." Disturbed, though not spotted by a groundsman, Bertrand made his escape. He returned to the grave two days later and dug it up with his hands. On reaching the body he split open the abdomen and fondled the intestines while masturbating. Satiated, he filled in the grave and left. Some months later he disinterred the body of a 16-year-old girl and had full sex with the corpse. Afterwards admitting, "Having enjoyed the body for about a quarter of an hour, I cut it up and, as in the case of my other victims, tore out her intestines." Bertrand was arrested later that same year shortly after digging up his final victim whose vagina he had excised completely.

Bertrand's desires were intermittent, and between the incidents he acted perfectly rational, both socially and sexually. But when the compulsion to copulate and mutilate a corpse came over him there was nothing stopping him achieving his goal. On one occasion he disinterred over a dozen male cadavers, working in the most appalling weather conditions, before coming across a female. Quite a remarkable feat of stamina and determination. Two hundred years earlier he would have been suspected of some form of demonic possession, however, Bertrand was in fact a splanchnophile: a pathological lover of entrails. His fascination with viscera

was so great it caused re-stimulation of his sex drive even though he had orgasmed only minutes before their exposure.

Attraction to entrails is evident in many sexual murders. The most notable is Jack the Ripper who's MO contained unequivocal ritualistic elements, in particular the curious inverted V-shaped symbols cut beneath the eyes of Catherine Eddowes. The relics taken from his victims included the heart, uterus and kidney, which were, as one doctor noted, "of no use for any professional purpose". What use the Ripper put them to has never been established, though cannibalism of the kidney was admitted in a letter believed to be from the killer.

On Wednesday, November 15, 1944, another deranged splanchnophile, Otto Stephen Wilson, embarked on an ephemeral double homicide that earned him the nickname 'Steve the Ripper'. Wilson picked up 25-year-old Virginia Griffith in a bar in Los Angeles. She accompanied him back to his hotel room where they prepared for sex. Wilson, however, had other, more urgent business, and strangled Ms. Griffith to death. He then took a nine-inch carving knife to her body. Griffith's left leg was laboriously sawn away at the hip, her right leg was slashed down the thigh several times and cut deeply at the knee exposing the joint. The right arm was virtually amputated at the shoulder. The breasts were mutilated and the torso sliced open from throat to vagina. The gash was parted to allow the expulsion of her intestines. Following Griffith's disembowelment Wilson became satisfied. He washed, dressed and left, leaving the ripped-up corpse for the room-cleaner to discover. However, his gratification was only short lived. Later that same day, in another bar, he picked up 38-year-old Lillian Johnson. He took her to a different hotel where she too was strangled and mutilated, this time with Wilson's razor — he had left his carving knife by the body of his first victim. Particular attention was afforded to Johnson's breasts and a single cut ran from the base of her throat to her left knee. Another sweeping cut came up her left thigh and curved over the lower belly almost separating the *mons veneris* from the groin. No attempt was made to amputate the extremities, probably due to the difficulty such a task would prove with a razor. Wilson, despite being seen with each victim by several witnesses didn't attempt to evade arrest. Casually, he went in search of a third victim but was apprehended by police in a bar following the discovery of the bodies. What initially began as a desire to have sex became a compulsion to expose his partner's entrails, the same compulsion that overcame Bertrand. Wilson could offer no explanation for his behaviour and ultimately perished in San Quentin's gas chamber.

Three years later Elizabeth Short, a star-struck occasional prostitute known locally as the 'Black Dahlia', suffered at the hands of an over-killing lustmurderer in January, 1947. After her sacrifice, the killer was compelled to publicly display the victim. Instead of disposing of the remains, he risked capture by transporting them and laying them in a pose on the very public grass verge where she was found. The body was



The remains of Elizabeth Short

cut clean through at the waist. The upper half was positioned with both arms raised above the head. The lower half — in line, but about a foot away from the upper section — was placed with the legs spread wide exposing Short's genitals. A four-inch vertical wound split the abdomen just above the *mons veneris* as though the killer had created an additional vagina.⁴ There were multiple surface cuts on her abdomen and both breasts were sliced open. Two lengthy incisions which went completely through the cheek muscle extended from the corners of her mouth almost reaching her ears. A bone-deep block of flesh and muscle had been cut away from her left thigh, pieces of which had been inserted into her anus and vagina. Neither half of the body contained any blood indicating it had been purposely drained. The dilated anus suggested Short's lower half had been used for sexual purposes following death. No one was ever charged with her murder but newspapers of the day blamed a 'werewolf' or 'vampire' most probably because they assumed the missing blood had been drawn off for the purpose of consumption. Vast quantities of blood were also prized by Rais, probably for use in scribing unholy texts as much as ritual quaffing. Marc Cramer in *The Devil Within* relates, "When Bluebeard [Rais] was finally apprehended the heads of murdered children were found in his secret laboratory, along with hundreds of glass alembics filled to the brim with blood," which suggests it may have been used in the process of alchemy.

In the late 19th Century a man named Victor Ardisson developed a taste for his own semen and other people's urine. He was also known by the men of his village as one who would fellate any of them at any time and Ardisson would swallow all emissions lovingly. But consuming bodily discharge wasn't Ardisson's only proclivity. As reported in Maurice Hirschfeld's *Sexual Anomalies and Perversions*

He took the corpse of a 3-year-old child with him and abused the corpse, even when genitals and intestines were already a decaying, stinking mass. The head of a 13-year-old girl, which he had cut off and taken home, he mummified in some manner and kept it for

a long time. He used to kiss it and call it 'my fiancée.'

Ardisson afforded devotion towards the severed head like Rais had done. His indulgence in necro-paedophilia with a rotting infant is less serious a crime — if technically a crime *at all* — than Rais' sex with the freshly murdered. But it is that much more revolting, surpassing even the practices of Sergeant Bertrand who also achieved excitement from contact with dead bowels. Whereas Bertrand's behaviour was sporadic, Ardisson's was constant; in fact it seems he was severely imbecilic. In a recent and similar case in Britain a suspected child abductor's home was searched and police discovered, stored in a cupboard, the body of a female infant. She was naked and folded in a manner that exposed her genitals. The vagina and anus were vastly dilated and in a severe state of decay. Recent semen deposits indicated the man was still using the feculent orifices for intercourse.

Necrophilia with the rotting dead is very rare. Most necrophiles are attracted to the funerary elements as much as the bodies, but do not relish decomposing matter. The sight and stench of rotting flesh repels a normal person — and the average necrophile — as an instinctive survival reaction since contact with such matter could result in illness or even fatal infection. But such substance is a sexual turn-on for men like Ardisson. The natural olfactory sex trigger, pheromone, has been abandoned in preference for the redolence of putrefaction. Odours, of course, have the ability to trigger human emotions or reactions, including sexual response. This process for Ardisson has been inverted⁵ and it is easy to see how, in the past, men like him have been identified as occult practitioners. Aromas play a large part in cabalistic ritual which is why holy places are generally infused with incense and exotic fragrances. But ritual of black magic and sorcery demands the use of repulsive odours and, as Summers relates, "At the Sabbath the devil's incense is the fume of heavy and noxious weeds, which stink extremely." Further, he points out, "Many demonologists say that witches could often be detected by their foul and noxious odour." And one individual was "almost suffocated by the fetor proceeding from a notoriously wicked man..." Such offensive odours would be detectable on Ardisson and his British counterpart. Both men, too, would have doubtless contracted some kind of urethral infection from the virulent organisms flourishing in the decaying matter. This, in turn, would poison their bloodstream and like many untreated sexually transmitted diseases contaminate and corrupt the structure of the brain. In the early centuries, to the superstitious, the resultant physical and mental changes would arouse suspicion of witchcraft. Discovery of human remains on their property would confirm they were indeed 'practising sorcerers'. Bertrand, Otto Wilson, the killer of Elizabeth Short and Victor Ardisson may not have been involved in any established occult practice even though the nature of their crimes had ritual-like elements. Likely, they were just crazed sexual deviants.⁶ But the effect, or public perception of their crimes was of an occult nature. Bertrand was a

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'phantom ghoul', Wilson a 'vampire', Short's killer a 'werewolf', all anomalous creatures of superstition and magic. But there are those whose crimes of sexual deviancy are undeniably linked to sorcery and black magic.

The following account of a crime which occurred in Africa in the Sixties is related by forensic pathologist John Thompson in his book *Crime Scientist*. The incident concerns a farm employee named Mynhezi who murdered a co-worker for the sole purpose of obtaining body parts for use in magical formulas.

In his bedroom were a dried human heart and a set of male genital organs while a number of assorted human vertebrae and long bones were found buried outside the house. But the most gruesome discovery was made further away from the house hidden in a small outcrop of rocks. Here was unearthed a complete human skin, all in one piece including the head. There was a hole in the skin of the forehead through which, it was later proved, the brains had been extracted. The grisly cache of human remains also included some lengths of human intestine.

The meticulous dissection Mynhezi carried out on his victim verifies he was well practised in this type of work so had probably murdered before. Nor was his work mere shoddy disposal-dissection. The hands of the victim, for example, were divided into three parts: the hand was removed at the wrist; the thumb was detached at the root; the fingers — all four remaining attached together — cut away at the knuckle of the palm. Similarly, the toes — again, all unseparated — were cut from the severed feet. The motive of this murder was sorcery, although the fact that the severed genitals were found in Mynhezi's bedroom may point to some sexual experimentation with those parts. Whether Mynhezi was himself a sorcerer or just a supplier of human parts to other sorcerers is not known for certain. However, Mynhezi's failed attempts to gain a plea of insanity during his trial suggest he was more than likely a practising magician and the remains were for his use alone.

Following intoxication with alcohol and drugs Jeffrey Dahmer would drill a small hole through the top of the head of his victim and inject a corrosive fluid to eat away part of the brain. This bizarre experiment was performed to eliminate the need for an instant kill. He wanted to create a living, zombie-like creature he could use as a sexual device any time his craving demanded it. The advantage Dahmer saw in having such a soulless accessory was the elimination of the need to trawl for victims when his urges required satiating. On the downside, the lack of multiple victims would have the effect of diminishing his supply of body parts he needed to construct his altar. In the end he only tried this operation once, and even then the subject was bludgeoned to death before any success could be determined.

Like his predecessors, Dahmer was a



Human body broken down into magical components

splanchnophile, he advanced from sodomy and oral sex to using the opened abdomen as a sexual receptacle, achieving orgasm over the sight, smell and feel of the viscera. Knowing such degradable remains could not be preserved, he used a Polaroid camera to retain the images indefinitely. Rais, Bertrand, the Ripper, Wilson, the killer of Elizabeth Short, all shared the same overwhelming desire to invade the privacy of the sealed abdomen and take pleasure from the viscera within. Such practice is like an excessive form of coprophilia, the craving to play with or eat warm excrement as it exudes from the bowels. In these extreme cases fascination has diverted away from the substance expelled from the bowels to the bowels and intestines themselves. But the fascination with viscera also has an occult link. In ancient times the opened human torso was used as an oracle by sorcerers. Splanchnomancy,⁷ as it was called, was performed by the Aztecs and Etruscans on living human beings, whereby the shaman believed the exposed, heaving intestines foretold the future. Of course, the lay of disembowelled intestines cannot predict coming events and it is likely that the sorcerers, as well as the monarchs they worked for, gained intense pleasure and sexual excitement from the procedure.

Dahmer also embodied Rais in his desire to collect the severed heads of his victims. And sexual satisfaction wasn't the only motive for Dahmer's crimes either, for he too had an interest in the black arts. As Rais had a ritual chamber specially assembled in the subterranean cellars of Tiffauges, Dahmer planned to use skulls and other body parts in the construction of a magical altar in his apartment. He admitted its intended purpose was to "get in contact with the spirits". When questioned as to what he hoped to achieve from this his response again reflected the same desires as Rais:

potential accumulation of wealth. Dahmer's sorcery was based on necromancy, and his rituals required the same accoutrements as Mynhezi, mentioned earlier. This is clearly seen with his treatment of one particular victim. After death, Dahmer painstakingly skinned the man's entire body then dismantled and disposed of the remains, keeping only the skull and the flayed mantle. He claimed to have later destroyed the skin in acid, probably because he failed to preserve it properly and it had begun to corrupt, but his intentions were obvious. Dahmer meant to wear the skin as part of his occult ritual. In fact, clothed in the skin of a black man and surrounded by his collection of heads, hands and genitals, he would have become the masculine representation of Kali.

Dahmer's altar never was constructed because arrest prevented him acquiring the necessary number of heads. He had some prepared, but not enough. His sketched plans showed his altar in detail, even down to the proposed colour scheme. The table was adorned with 10 skulls and incense burners, to the left and right of the table stood two complete skeletons. Centrally placed on the wall was a plaque painted with eyes. Behind the table stood a seven-lamped free-standing light, looking like an inverted *Menorah*, the hallowed Jewish seven-branched candelabrum. The colour scheme was invariable black enhanced with blue. The floor a chequerboard of black and white, the standard temple design.

What Dahmer had planned to construct was, in effect, a *tabernacle*. Or, to be more accurate, a Black Tabernacle. Within the biblical tabernacle, as constructed by Moses, was the Ark of the Covenant containing the stone tablets engraved with the 10 commandments. Dahmer's table, centrepiece of his shrine, was to have held 10 skulls. He had three already prepared which were painted in a stone or marble effect. The Ark was flanked with two gold cherubim. In like manner, Dahmer's table was flanked with two painted skeletons. Moses received instructions to place within the tabernacle a seven-branched candelstick and incense, and Dahmer replicated these items also. Moses' tabernacle was a place where communication with God was possible; Dahmer's a place where he hoped to summon the devil.⁸

- "It had a bar in one corner in a Jamaican style and a black magic sign on the top..." Mae West's description of the interior of her mother Rosemary's room.
- "I remember me and Charmaine huddling down together thinking that the witches were coming after us." Ann-Marie West reminiscing over her step-sister before she was sacrificed by her father and step-mother.
- "Skulls had been painted or stencilled [on the walls] at various points..." Paul Britton, psychologist, describing the torture cellar of 25 Cromwell Street.
- "He could charm the birds out of the trees, *literally*." Rosemary West speaking of her husband's uncanny abilities.

Frederick Walter Stephen West was born on 29 September, 1941 in the rural village of Much Marcle about 12 miles north-west of Gloucester and described by one person as a place of 'endemic incest'. On January 1, 1995 West died in a Gloucestershire prison cell by committing suicide to evade trial and conviction of the murder of a dozen girls. It is quite ironic that West died by strangulation, not only duplicating the crimes, but also the death of his 15th century counterpart Gilles de Rais.

In 1962, West married Katherine Costello who was carrying the child of her previous lover at the time. Together they lived in the concrete sprawl of Glasgow where Katherine suffered at the hands of her brutal husband. She eventually gave birth to a girl whom they named Charmaine and the family moved closer to West's roots and travelled to Hereford where they lived for a time in a caravan. Katherine became pregnant again, providing them with another daughter, Anne-Marie. In 1967 Katherine left Fred, probably because he had made pregnant their 18-year-old nanny, Anne McFall. With his wife out of the way, West murdered McFall, sliced her open and dismembered her, then buried her remains in a quiet corner of a farmer's field where she and the plucked-out infant lay undisturbed for 27 years. After a period of relatively unsuccessful prostitution, Katherine came back to live with Fred and she, too, was murdered and buried in a field. In 1972 Fred married Rosemary Letts and together they began a career of murder and sexual torture that would surpass the crimes of that most infamous British partnership, Brady and Hindley.

Unlike Brady, West was illiterate. Like Brady he was an ultra-violent sex monster. Although he had murdered before Rose came on the scene, his condition was nurtured and worsened by her enthusiastic involvement in his lifestyle. Over a period of more than 20 years they would torture and murder young girls, even slaughtering their own daughters when no stranger was available to kill. Although sex and convenience seemed to be the motive for all the killings their crimes were also patterned with multiple occult characteristics. Likely, 25 Cromwell Street was the place they chose to conduct their sacrifices and ritual burials because that particular house was situated next door to a church — sacred ground.

Most all the victims had been subjected to some form of sexual humiliation and torture before being killed and dismembered. The head of one victim was discovered wrapped in layers of adhesive tape with a thin breathing tube inserted. This would enable controlled suffocation during sexual assaults; a practice that delighted Gilles de Rais. As the recovered remains were all in skeletal form, mutilation of the soft tissues can only be suspected, but it is as good as verified that West mutilated and eviscerated the girls while they were alive.

During the ritual of dismemberment West paid special attention to the extremities. He would invariably remove the fingers, hands and feet and chisel out the kneecaps. One girl even had her shoulder blade wrenched away. It is likely that such operations were not

inflicted *post-mortem* but performed on the living victim as a form of ceremonial torture. In most cases, these particular bones were not found with the rest of the victim's remains. This indicates that their removal was not only to inflict unimaginable pain but that they were *sought*, and, as already shown, these are the bones favoured by sorcerers for grinding into powder form. After death the heads were cut off and the legs separated from the torsos. Unlike Rais and Dahmer, West had no interest in keeping the heads simply because he had no affection towards his victims, even his own daughters. Like Rais, however, torture gave him great sexual excitement. Like Dahmer he had a fascination with viscera and even considered buying an endoscope to push through victim's abdomens so he could view their living organs. Like Bertrand he would indulge in sex with the corpses. He would cut girls in half to get at their innards, slice open their bellies and wombs to scoop out foetuses. But what Fred West did in his cellar is probably best pre-envisaged by J.K. Huysmans in his circa 1900 novel *Là Bas* concerning the crimes of Gilles de Rais

They [the victims] were undressed and gagged. The Marshal felt them and assaulted them, then he slashed them with a dagger, dismembering them part by part. At the same time he cut into their chests and sucked in the breath from their lungs; he opened their stomachs, smelled them, spread out the skin with his hands and sat on it. Then, while soaking himself in the slime of the warm entrails, he turned a little and looked over his shoulder so as to observe the final convulsions and last spasms. He said to himself, "I am happier enjoying tortures, tears and the shedding of blood than any other pleasure..." Soon his madness worsened... He defiled dead children... one day when his supply of children failed, [he] went so far as to disembowel a pregnant woman and fondle the foetus.

When he infected his 15-year-old daughter with gonorrhoea, hospital staff discovered she was ectopically pregnant and the foetus was removed. As West had refrained from using a condom, pregnancy, as well as the satisfaction he gained from rape and incestuous sex, seems to have been his aim. This is confirmed further when it was discovered that Rose, an active prostitute, would supply condoms recently used by herself and a punter to her husband who would syringe out the semen and inject it into his daughter's vagina. Such an experiment was obviously conducted to induce pregnancy. As it would not be possible to allow their underage daughter to carry the pregnancy full term, then the action was likely a method of obtaining foetuses. It is known that West had been offering his skills as an impromptu doctor able to terminate unwanted pregnancies. West had many times boasted to his friends that he had the tools and know-how to perform abortions. Whether he ever performed any such operations as a service is not currently known, his claims may have been nothing but bravado intended to impress or shock his male associates. However, it is

known that he *did* carry out such operations on two of his victims, whether pre- or post-mortem is impossible to tell. When the remains of Shirley Robinson were found in West's garden the fragile skeleton of the foetus was also discovered, but separate from the mother's body. The baby was eight months developed when West cut it from the womb. The remains of a foetus were also found with Ann McFall's skeleton. Again it had been torn out of the body prior to burial and possibly prior to the death of Ann. Foetuses, in particular their immature organs, are the most arcane and powerful ingredients in black magic formulas and ritual sorcery.

An indication as to the potency sorcerers believe is inherent in the foetus is found in **Sexual Anomalies and Perversions**

The belief in the magic powers of innocent, or even unborn, children, has led to gruesome acts, particularly in earlier times. Thus, for instance, a peasant in an ancient collection of *Most Terrible Murder Stories* relates how two footpads compelled him to hand over his pregnant wife to them, and how, after tying her to a tree, they began to cut open her abdomen, being caught in the act, and being subsequently broken on the wheel and tortured with white hot pincers. At their trial they confessed that they had already eaten the hearts of two unborn children and would have been rendered invisible had they succeeded in eating a third, so that they could have acquired riches and could have performed all sorts of miracles.

Archaic this report may be and therefore acceptable as a bygone practice encouraged by superstition and false belief. However, recent reports have shown that this form of cannibalism is practised in China today. Aborted



Witches and devils devouring foetuses at the Sabbat



Early woodcut depicting Satan in the form of a man/bull summoning witches to the Sabbath

foetuses are provided by hospitals to those who request them for the sole purpose of consuming. The sizes of the foetuses range from thumb-sized specimens to full-term babies. The smaller ones are generally blended into a soup, whereas the larger ones are prized for their organs. Consumption is not undertaken to achieve any magical abilities like invisibility, but *magical* effect is sought nonetheless in the sense that the assumed benefits — revitalisation and regeneration of cells — are fostered by superstition. But then, what ingestible substances and chemical properties does a foetus

contain? And what effect would these have on the consumer? Folklore dictates that 'flying ointment', as prepared and used by witches, was produced mainly from baby fat, blood and pulped organs. The resultant unction was smeared onto the body of the witch who then had the ability to fly. Or at least that is what they believed they achieved. It is possible that certain chemicals were absorbed through the skin or ingested and placed the user in a hallucinogenic state promoting something similar to an out of body experience.

West wasn't only trying to impregnate his daughter, and his experiments with conception had purposes other than simply providing foetuses. "He used to play around with syringes and would attempt to artificially inseminate mum," Mae reported of her father. As with his daughter, such a practice would be performed for no other reason than effecting conception. West had his own bizarre theories about genetic splicing and would talk about having his wife mate with a bull; perhaps in a jocular manner deriding her craving to be penetrated by well-endowed males. But, as the corner posts on Rose's four-poster bed were each topped with a model bull, maybe there was something more to it. "Dad always wanted to breed mum with a bull... He believed you could muck around genetically with people," stated his son Stephen. Perhaps West thought it would be possible that she could indeed conceive and produce some kind of grotesque half-human deformity. H.T.F. Rhodes writes in *The Satanic Mass*

[According to] Guazzo, a distinguished scholar and Ambrosian Brother of the late 16th century... It would appear that demons were the first discoverers of the process of artificial insemination since they are able to transport human semen over great distances and in such a way that it retains its potency. By some method, unknown or unexplained, they were able to inject it so that pregnancy resulted. This then remarkable feat ensured that Satanic characteristics would be transmitted to the offspring.

And, in the mind of West, the result of a successful fusion of a single bovine sperm and human oocyte would produce a horned and cloven-hoofed anthropoid: an archetypal demon or devil. This notion of interspecies fertilisation may not have originated in the warped mind of Fred West alone, but could have been planted and nurtured there. In fact, it may have formed part of an occult ceremony performed by members of the community in his place of birth. The parish church of Much Marcle, undoubtedly frequented by West as a child, contains an unusual wooden effigy of a reclining man with his feet resting on a bull or cow. On his belt hangs a padlock and a sword. The sword handle is unusually phallic in design and the padlock — a device with an orifice which when penetrated by a shaft can produce great riches — could be interpreted as a symbolic vagina. His legs, which lead to the animal, are crossed. As a whole the totem could be interpreted as an image depicting the cross-breeding between man and bovine. The idol was used in curious rites by the villagers until recent times.

West didn't only perform his atrocities in the cellar of 25 Cromwell Street. He talked of transporting the bodies to an isolated farm some 10 miles from his home where he indulged in practices so vile he wouldn't volunteer further details about. Afterwards, the bodies were cut up with an ice saw and brought back to the house in plastic bins for burial. The concept of West using another location is unnerving, and, unless he was speaking of a derelict farm building, potentially suggests accomplices. Indeed, West admitted that other people were involved in the crimes but his claims were considered by the authorities to be fanciful attempts to apportion blame. Maybe so, but what if he spoke the truth? Could it be possible that West was merely a supplier of human carcasses and anatomical parts for a practising coven? One psychologist claimed that serrations evident on some of the long bones unearthed at Cromwell Street suggested that meat was cut from the victims, probably for cannibalistic purposes. Could that be West's unmentionable activity: the devouring of the victims. Such sacrificial activity is reminiscent of the ancient cult of Dionysus, a deity who is represented as a man in the form of a bull or goat. J.G. Frazer writes in *The Golden Bough*, "... in some places, instead of an animal, a human being was torn into pieces at the rites of Dionysus." The flesh collected during the ripping apart of the victim was then eaten raw by those participating in the rite.

There are many indications that mark the Wests as sorcerers, not least the names chosen for their daughters: Charmaine (Charm: to bewitch by magic); Anne-Marie (An[ti]maria: gender transmutation of Antichrist); Heather (Heathen); Mae (Maenad: flesh-eating female disciple of Dionysus); Tara (Hindu goddess related to the aforementioned Kali); Lucyana (Lucina a Roman birth goddess associated with Candelifera and thus a gender transmutation of Lucifer). Perhaps even the name 'Rosemary' attracted Fred as the blue-flowered shrub of the same name is, according to Peter Underwood's *Dictionary of the Occult and Supernatural*, used by sorcerers "in sex magic to ensure undying and all consuming love". Other pointers include the black magic sign and painted skulls found within the house; the use of a location next to a church for torture, sacrifice and burial; the multiple sacrifices and dismemberments; the selection of specific bones from the bodies; the removal of foetuses; Fred's admission that his life began at night; nocturnal trips with the dead to secluded rural areas. His suicide is also significant in its timing and method. New Year's Day is a time when sorcerers believe transmigration of the soul is better assured, and, as to the method of West's death we find in Frazer's *Psyche's Task* "... the spirits of men who have died a violent death by drowning, hanging, or other means are supposed to become demons, wandering about to inflict injury in various ways upon mankind. Especially the ghosts of murderers who have been hanged are believed to haunt the place of execution and its neighbourhood." There was also West's confused attempts to produce a living, devil-like entity: a horned god.

Assimilation of animal attributes forms a part of

most occult ceremonies. The Dionysian cult of the bull and goat, the Leopard Men of the Congo are the two most prominent examples. Animal skins were strewn on the floor of Rose's sex chamber and were likely worn by her punters who she specifically requested to be 'black and well endowed'. During the Black Mass, men wear goatskins while copulating with female idolaters. Furthermore, an idol is worshipped in the form of a goat-man — something similar to what Rose West would have given birth to had inter-species fertilisation been possible. This effigy provides the Black Mass with its alternative name of the Sabbat of the Goat. Is it, then, just an ironic coincidence that when Rose was arrested and charged with multiple murder she selected a solicitor to represent her by the name of Leo Goatley?



Rosemary: The wicked witch of the West.

Thanks to Simon Whitechapel for assistance with translations

Notes

1. The fact that the head itself had not been cut off and no major blood vessels had been severed in the neck suggests that the man may have been alive throughout the mutilation. It is entirely possible that he remained alive for some time afterwards which suggests that torture was as much a part of the ritual as trophyism.
2. The name applied to a shrunken-head trophy by the Jivaro.
3. An inauguration identical to that of 20th-Century paraphile Jeffrey Dahmer.
4. Short's vagina was improperly formed making normal intercourse virtually impossible.
5. Inversion of 'normality' is the main motif of sorcery and black magic: inverted cross; reversed Lord's Prayer etc.
6. Though Ardisson's devotion towards the severed head of a girl, for instance, is no more 'mad' than any religious zealot's affection towards an invisible deity or severed head of a Saint, just not socially accepted.
7. Primitive cultures still practice this form of sorcery today but the victims are generally goats or chickens
8. In December, 1994, in his prison cell, Jeffrey Dahmer did confront a demon by the name of Christopher Scarver. Indeed, it was Dahmer's murderous rituals that had caused this visitation. Scarver, a crazed psychopath and self-named Son of God, wielded a broom handle and set about Dahmer in a frenzied manner bursting his skull apart and stabbing the splintered wooden shaft into his brain.

HER SISTER'S DIARY

a close look at Bruce Seven's LOOSE ENDS IV

Miles Wood

Loose Ends IV (1988, 106mins)
Produced and Directed by Bruce Seven, Cinematography (sic) by Michael Cates. With: Bianca, Viper, Fallon, John Leslie, Peter North, Joey Silvera, Jan Sanders (aka Jon Dough), Laurel Canyon, Don Fernando, Erica Boyer, Billy Dee, Eric Stone

A blandly lit shot-on-video image of Bianca accompanying an appalling vocal track that even a daytime Australian soap producer would have thought twice about using. Then the tell-tale credit: "A Bruce Seven Production" and as the cast list rolls the viewer is treated to glimpses of what's to come.

Bruce Seven maybe one of XXX's true auteurs, in that his product may quite easily be recognised, but this generally translates as most of the films being alarmingly similar, with the same sexual peccadilloes appearing time and time again, rather than a body of work reflecting an individual and interesting expression of sexuality. Seven probably started to get noticed with his Vivid collaborations with Ginger Lynn in the mid-Eighties, and more recently he worked on some of

John Stagliano's Buttman movies, but it is his *Loose Ends* series, launched in 1984 and which had stretched to six films by 1989, that remains the centrepiece of Seven's oeuvre.

Loose Ends IV opens with Alicia (played by Bianca) enquiring of the man sitting on her bed (Joey Silvera) what he thinks of her lingerie. "I like it. Hey, what did you say your name was?" By refusing to give a straight answer Alicia somewhat exasperates the man, who makes to leave. However, she decides he seems like a nice guy and strips off, after which it's a case of 'what's a guy to do?' and he resigns himself to "One more time". Bianca's performance here is particularly impressive, and despite the escalating variations that follow throughout the rest of the film, this quite straightforward sex scene remains memorable. Her unexaggerated facial expressions leave the viewer in little doubt that she's genuinely experiencing sexual pleasure (and thankfully, the film doesn't subject the viewer to irritatingly over-the-top post-production-dubbed moaning), so much so in fact that the routine porno climax with his ejaculation onto her breasts and her smearing his semen over her body seems doubly dissatisfying: scrutinising her face one can discern, dare say it, a hint of regret along with a not totally satiated lust.

Allison (also Bianca) is Alicia's twin sister and she phones up to tell her sis that she won't be home for a few days, leaving Alicia to find Allison's diary which she decides — seeing as Joey Silvera has disappeared — to pass the time reading.

"I was having a lot of sexual problems so I called Linda... at first I was terrified..." Allison's record begins, as we cut to her having clothes pegs attached to her labia and nipples and then having candle wax dripped on said areas by Erica Boyer. The scene is brief and fades out to "Lucky for me it was only a dream." Actually it's a scene from *Loose Ends II*. "Lucky for me too," Alicia comments somewhat meaninglessly, before returning to the diary.

"Cousin Tiger was so sensual she moved like the belly of a snake," the narration continues, as we see Tiger (Viper) greedily devouring John Leslie's rack, while a second man watches from the doorway. Leslie and Viper fuck on the couch for a while, then we cut to her on her knees obeying Leslie's command to "put your fingers up there... put your hand up there". As he slaps her arse hard enough to leave a red hand print and she literally holds herself open, pleading for him to hit her and fuck her, Leslie comes across as a genuinely nasty piece of work. Is this acting or a genuinely sadistic streak showing through? Scene then cuts to Viper — on top of Leslie — with her fingers in her rectum, which are then replaced by the other man's prick in a no-holds-barred double penetration: Viper with her distinctive tatoo and virtually flat chest (she's since had a boob job) is hardly amongst the most attractive porn actresses, but here she pretty much compensates for it, appearing totally unrestrained, acting like a wild animal and certainly justifying her character's name, while Leslie pulls her hair and is generally none too pleasant. It all ends with the unnamed man coming on her spread cheeks and Leslie ejaculating on her face — "Don't lick it!" he commands — as she kneels before him.

We next have "the girls" arriving at the house for a pyjama party, but Alicia decides to retire and read her sister's diary instead, which goes on to describe... a pyjama party; though naturally it turns into a five-girl orgy, to the accompaniment of a dire prog-rock soundtrack. Bits of this are actually pretty silly (one girl flapping her breast at Bianca's ass is a moment of prime stupidity) but there are undoubtedly a couple of highlights: Bianca having anal beads (something of a Bruce Seven trademark) inserted and removed, and Patsy (Fallon) masturbating and squirting, her leg accidentally knocking the camera in the throes of orgasm. "I'm not a prude, but this is outrageous," comments Alicia.

"Sex became the centre of our lives. We couldn't get enough." Luke (future porn legend Peter North) is sort of tied up (i.e. we can see he could easily get free) and teased by Patsy and Allison

— cut to Alicia seated in a black leather chair masturbating — who perform in front of him before sharing his cock in their mouths, while what sounds like a cover of Billy Idol's 'White Wedding' plays on the audio



Bionca reads the diary

— back to Alicia again, inserting her fingers in her vagina and ass, however, the scene doesn't really work as Bionca seems to be performing more for the camera than for herself, and when she supposedly comes it's barely noticeable

— returning to the threesome, the girls are now tied together, hands behind their backs, on their knees, asses in the air as Luke takes his turn with each of them.

— "I won't read any more of that trash!" Alicia pronounces.

But the film goes on, and we get Tiger sucking Patsy's breasts and slapping her buttocks, and the two orally stimulate each other before they are interrupted by two men (one is Jan Saunders). We then get a wipe (Seven getting cinematic!) to the two women giving the men blow jobs, after which Patsy is oiled in readiness for the "massage of [her] life" as her own fingers as well as Tiger's explore her rectum before an anal (we don't see the initial penetration), which ends with the man (not Saunders) coming on her ass before the second man ejaculates onto the two women's breasts.

"We kept trying to top ourselves. Each time had to be wilder than the last." Cut to a close-up of a nipple-ring being inserted into the suspended-by-leather-bracelets form of Janey Robbins from the initial *Loose End*, which then dissolves to Tiger getting the same treatment, while Bionca spansks and lightly whips her, before an all-out S/M-tinged orgy develops, which is pretty unconvincing and quite tedious as Seven rather lazily seems to

have just let his performers get on with it. The scene actually needed some construction — there's just no build-up, no tension (essential for a bondage-S/M session) and eventually we are just treated to some random cum-shots, concluding with one girl with her tongue hanging out waiting to taste John Leslie; he naturally obliges.

A phone rings and Alicia says she must leave the house immediately.

Loose Ends IV is certainly no masterpiece of adult cinema. It's cheapness is all too readily displayed in its *mise-en-scene*: the single house setting, the flat lighting, the unimaginative direction — Seven's single attempt at composing a shot involves placing the camera behind a potted plant! Furthermore, its attempts to explore new sexual territory (of course, most porn films make this claim) have since been eclipsed by the likes of the *Sodomania* series. Yet the film does have some compensations for the intrepid viewer.

It certainly makes a fine showcase for two of its stars, though it's a shame Bionca — who's looks here recall both Michelle Bauer and Linda Lovelace — isn't allowed some more scope to explore the differing sexuality of twin sisters; indeed the idea is so undeveloped as to cause one to wonder if Seven was merely avoiding having to hire another actress. After all, Bionca was Seven's wife! (The couple apparently separated in 1993.) Like many porn actors/actresses, Bionca has since graduated to working behind — as well as in front of — the camera, directing (for Bruce Seven, of course) 1994's *Takin' It To The Limit* No's 1, 2 and 3, which seem to show little progression in terms of Seven's production techniques. Despite Bionca's exceptional opening scene, it is Fallon who remains most memorable. It is a pity her whole career was dependent on her 'gushing' talent — she starred in such unsubtly titled films as *The Squirt* — which the film undeniably makes a good use of, for she is also a beautiful and sexy performer, as can be attested by the erotic charge she infuses into her lesbian tryst with Viper, as well as her anal. Ultimately, however, *Loose Ends IV* remains a frustrating waste of both these actresses' talents and the viewer's time and patience.

ME GUSTAS MUCHO

a mexican musical overdose

Joe Scott Wilson

My uncle used to collect Italian 45s, imported into Bedford in lorries carrying grapes with which the Italian community there would make wine. I have this clear recollection of being a child and standing by his extremely huge gramophone player (so big he stored fruit in it), and watching him listening to these curious platters. They didn't actually contain music as such, just dialogue, mainly of men and women arguing — motorists supposedly caught in a traffic jam and yelling, etc. No singing, just this comedic Italian dialogue (though my uncle was the only one ever laughing, as best a man on 60 Capstan Full Strength a day can). My uncle would encourage me to dance to the argumentative banter emanating from the speakers, and call contemporary 'sounds' (i.e. any records he didn't own) "rubbish". On the flip side of some of these records could be found the occasional accordion solo, or more comedy... set to music.

Mexican music reminds me of that.

On the trail of extremely cheap records over the years, I have accumulated something of a minor

collection of albums featuring bands from South of the Border. The thing that first attracted me to these 'gems' (other than the price) were their sleeves... rather, the sleeve of one album in particular: Yoyito's Cabrera's **La Carne Lo Mato**. A man seated in a meat locker has a vacant expression across his face and a slab of meat in his hand (!), while two young women bend over him, for no other reason it appears than to reveal to the camera their knickers (the girl on the left has a brightly coloured mini dress and underwear to match). I had to know what sounds might be contained beneath such a well turned out sleeve, so I knocked off the dust and took the thing to the cash desk. Later, on my turntable, I found Yoyito Cabrera alluring enough to send me on a Mexican music trip, and I picked up Mex platters thereafter wherever I found them.

For the purposes of this column I listened to my modest collection, back to back, one after another, in no particular order...

LOS CUATITOS CANTU

(same) [Falcon Records, 1979]

The more astute record collector, upon setting eyes on the sleeve to this particular disc, might notice that two of the band members are dwarves. They're the singers. The opening track, *Me Gustas Mucho* [trans. 'I Am Fat?'], kicks in with a syncopated drumbeat and an accordionist who positively skips over the keys. As to the casual record buyer who might not have noticed the midget Cantu brothers in their showtime suits, once the vocals start it will be patently obvious to all and sundry that the sound is being produced by the 'vertically challenged'. (There's that edge to it.) But it is on *Eleazar Del Fierro* that the boys really come into their warbling own, furnishing each line of each verse with soft focus quackery. It is a clubland sound all right, but what clubs would Los Cuatitos Cantu play, I wonder? Is there a place for this stuff in Texas? (Where the House Of Falcon recording studios are situated.) Or might there have been in 1979? (When the recording was made.) The music is pretty much by the book — not novelty or



Los Cuatitos Cantu



Mike Renteria's mob

comedy, as one might expect given the circumstances. No one puts their musical neck out, except perhaps the drummer, who's fill in *Amor Derecho* is uncharacteristically obtrusive given the state of the rest of the album. And sure enough, all tracks seem to be about undying love, true love, unrequited love... It's on *Sentimiento De Color*, the last track of the album, that the boys get to croon in a drunken, forlorn kind of way, and the drummer goes a little crazy with his pig skin punctuation.

MIKE RENTERIA: CON LOS CUPIDOS NEGROS

(same) [Eclipse, 1977]

Truly horrible Easy Listening. Look at the sleeve — and the Henry Silva lookalikes — and think uneasy listening. A keyboard swamps the mix (the E.L. equivalent of white noise), pumping out chord changes over which the other instruments play. Band leader Mike Renteria knows nothing of the economy of sound; there is no texture in any of his tracks; no shades of grey, just one instrument atop another, and all atop the humming keyboard. Occasional instrumental breaks are provided by a musical device which sounds unlike any other on this earth, and totally out of step with the Mike Renteria experience. It's sheer arrogance can perhaps be likened to the experimental tweakings of Brian Eno in *Roxy Music* — so let's call this instrument the Eno Organ for the sake of argument. The Eno Organ befalls the mix between verses and just 'distorts', basically. The drumming consists almost entirely of 16ths all the way through the album, and gives the impression that the beat is so needlessly fast and twee that it must be emanating from a drum machine, which of course wasn't invented then. *No Me Niegues Tus Besos*, the opening track on side two, utilises a guitar with an effect on it, but apart from that, no production at all seems to have gone into this album. The instruments — with noted exception — all produce a flat and colourless sound over the unbroken keyboard drone. In fact, all 10 tracks appear to be taken on the same song. (Los Cuatitos Cantu — the dwarves — come over as Page and Plant next to this.) Turning to the reverse of the sleeve a moment, [above] look at the guy at the back of the group line-up, relegated a few steps behind everyone else —



Los Hnos. Barron

Boy, does he look glum! (Presumably he operates the Eno Organ.) The guy one step in front of him looks like he's just flipped Santo out of the ring. This isn't a musical group, it's the evolution of man on a record sleeve. Mike Renteria is credited with being the composer of some great love songs — so, where are they?

LOS HNOS. BARRON

CONJUNTO SABOR [Joey Records, 1979]

As with the above albums, the sleeve 'notes' to *Conjunto Sabor* would indicate that Los Hnos. Barron are an established act with some success behind them. However, unlike Los Cuatitos Cantu and Mike Renteria, this has a more 'rural' quality to it, lacking the 'showbiz' of the former: El Mariachi guitar with 'agricultural' vocals, trumpet. The lyrics are less ballroom, too, singing about police, prison and piss-ups. Should there be any doubt that these boys are of the people for the people, take a look at them being rounded-up and arrested on the front and back covers — each of the four photos features the band and guns, like they're about to re-enact an episode of *Bonanza*. (Is this the boys at their day job?) *A Las Tres De La Mañana* and *El Negrito Del Batey* are a couple of outstanding tracks on an album which is itself consistently entertaining, perfectly capturing essence of outlaw and the stench of over-ripe bar tenders and too much tequila. *Maracaibo* takes off with a cheap plinking piano with the vocals intercepting in best free-form Hispanic tradition. Very small children love this sound; they dance and turn the volume up — I take satisfaction in hiding my two-year-old nephew's Early Learning Nursery Rhymes cassette and playing for him instead Los Hnos. Barron. *Los Tres Campesinos* on the second side allows the accordionist to show off some licks, and a peculiar discordant riff. Funny enough, this second side of the album is without the cheap piano which permeates every track on side one — maybe the pianist had a mishap in the photo shoot?



Yoyito Cabrera

YOYITO CABRERA

LA CARNE LO MATO [West Side Records, 1977]

If ever Joe Scott was stranded on a desert island this is the record he would hope to have with him (on failing that, it's sleeve). Yoyito Cabrera — presumably that's him in the meat locker — is to music what Alejandro Jodorowsky is to film. The opening track, *Lo Matto La Carne*, gets the album off to a blistering start, erupting from the speakers and setting the tone for what is to follow (more of the same, basically). It's a cacophony all right, but an orderly one in that, defying the laws of gravity, it somehow hangs together. If each instrument was to be isolated (guitar, tom toms, piano, trumpets), I'm certain each of their musical paths would be diametrically opposed to one another. But Yoyito and his babbling — driving, dynamic and audacious — somehow keeps it all from crashing down to earth. Part way through this opening track, Yoyito starts to laugh and scream. No matter how many times I listen to *Lo Matto La Carne* I can't figure if this is a predetermined aspect of the composition or merely a rash decision on Yoyito's part. On *Yaya Con Dios* Yoyito sings as though he's forgotten to put his teeth in. His voice is gruff and wise in liquor. (I don't expect any of these Mex artists had the opportunity to go for a second take or bother with overdubs — life is simply too short.) On *Yaya...* Yoyito cackles on the fade out. He is without question a spokesperson for an intoxicated generation. His *Son Guanajuato* is some reflection on politics and poverty — it's also the last track on side one and in the play out groove there is the faint but incontestable sound of some other track by some other artist filtering through. It's the sound you could expect to get after re-recording on a cheap cassette. Or, the sound which results when magnetic tape of 'Band A' is stored in close proximity to magnetic tape of 'Band B' for any duration... sort of. But the album doesn't let up: it's fast and contains no

sentimental filler, just abbreviated psychosis (all of the Mex records under discussion here contain 10 tracks — no more, no less — of approx. two or three minutes duration per track.) There is a funny effect on the playout of *Que No Me Toquen Mi Violin*, the last track, when the electric guitarist (the only instance of electricity on the whole album) appears to overstay his welcome and the trumpets simply over power it to bring the song to its close. On the reverse of the album sleeve can be found other artists and discs in the West Side

Records canon. Amongst them is another Yoyito Cabrera item, *Tomo Pegapalo*, which features on its cover a man stood on a sidewalk in a dapper suit, with a bevy of buxom Mexican bikini-clad beauties around him. Full of figure and big of thigh. The woman at the guy's feet isn't smiling. All the other West Side albums look to be of the easy listening variety, with 'respectable' covers (I wonder what 'Yomo Toro' sounds like, dressed as he is in a suit and tie).

LOS BÁRBAROS

(same) [Raff, 1973]

The opening number on this does sound like it's about to swing into comedy, what with its rinky-dink electric piano. Indeed, this opening track (*El Hombre Aparecido*) is almost 80% keyboard solo. But it's difficult not to be carried along on the enthusiasm of the whole thing — and there is a qualifying difference between this and, say, Mike Renteria in that the musicians do take it upon themselves to play over and above elementary chords. Alas, that said, three tracks into the album and we hit ballad territory (*Todo Pasara*). On the sleeve, Los Bárbaros look as though they have just commandeered a bridge for drug money. I thought they might have been a surf/garage unknown, being nerdy-looking in a garage kind of way whilst wearing sunglasses. But the nearest Los Bárbaros get to tearin' it up is a free-form guitar solo on *La Culebra*. There are also several cover versions too many — *Hoy Tan Bonita* is a familiar Perry Como-type of standard whose original title escapes me; *Cuando Llegue A Phoenix* is *By The Time I Get To Phoenix* by way of Bert Weedon. That said and done, the band perfectly anticipate the stereotype image of what Mexican music ought to be and produce a colourful, lively, samba-like racket with no black notes. Raff Records — 'El Disco Es Cultura'.

ON THE PISS

Simon Whitechapel

We all know the stories. One of the best appears in *Little Wilson & Big God*, the first part of Anthony Burgess' memoirs. In pre-war Manchester, one family regularly used to send its ageing grandfather to the local pub for a jug of beer to accompany the evening meal. Returning with the jug, the old man would sample its contents copiously and then make up the deficit in a secluded corner by pissing into it. In time he died and someone else began to collect the beer. The family complained that it lacked the body and fullness of flavour of granddad's day.

Some people, on the other hand, have known what they're drinking, and some of them have wanted to. Urolagnia — "piss-pleasure" in Greek — is probably one of the commonest fetishes, though not every urolagniac wants to go as far as drinking the stuff, and not everyone who drinks the stuff is a urolagniac. The psychoactive chemicals in the mushroom *Amanita muscaria*, or fly agaric, apparently survive filtration through the kidneys, and so the traditional mushroom-eating parties of Siberian tribesmen were conducted in stages, those after the first sometimes making use of specially designed urine-quaffing vessels.¹ On the other hand, someone who wanted to drink the stuff for sexual reasons may have been responsible for a curious adventure in a pulp novelization of the career of Steve Austin, better-known to those who grew up in the Seventies as the Six Million Dollar Man ("We can rebuild him, we have the technology" etc. etc.).

In Israel to defend democracy and the Israeli way, Austin finds himself stranded in the desert with a beautiful female army officer. Rescue is a day or two away and only the contents of their bladders stand between them and death by dehydration, so, well... *skol*. I was too young at the time of reading to see anything kinky in the episode, though I think it did occur to me that urine, like sea-water, is salty, and drinking sea-water is supposed to be worse than not drinking at all.² (Needless to say, none of the story was translated to the small screen.)

Urine has even been used as a medicine. According to an entire book written on the topic, Raciojibhai Manibhai Patel's *Manav Mootra: Auto-Urine Therapy*,³ it is a panacea, suitable for the cure of any kind of ailment: the contents pages list among other things "Elephantiasis, Piles and Inflammations of Uterus, Syphilis" and "Toothache". Patel was a practitioner of the Indian system of medicine known as Ayurveda, which has long contained a tradition of the medicinal use of urine, but apparently drew some of the inspiration for his own fervent recommendation of the practice from a Western writer called John Armstrong and his book *Water of Life*. Armstrong had been ill when a chance recollection of the Biblical injunction in Proverbs v, 15, "Drink waters of thine own cistern", had reminded him of the case of a young girl "whose father gave [her] her own urine to drink when she was suffering from diphtheria with the result that he cured her in three days."⁴ He adopted the practice himself and cured himself of his own illness:

I was thirty-six at the time and am now over sixty. Yet by practice of drinking of every drop of water I passed, living on a well balanced diet and never eating more than absolutely I required, I look and feel much younger than most men of my age and keep free from those major and minor ailments to which the body is said to be heir.⁵

Patel also describes some of the Eastern traditions enjoining medicinal use of urine, including *Shivambu-Kalpa*, a Sanskrit text "in the form of a dialogue between Lord Shiva and Parvati [Shiva's wife]"

O Parvati, one who drinks urine once a day and rubs it over the body for three years, gets a body full of strength and lustre, gets the knowledge of arts and science, attains speech with forceful execution, and lives as long as there are stars and moon in the sky.⁶

"Jain scriptures", and "Lamas in Tibet":

It is by the use of urine only that they have been able to keep their bodies healthy for hundred and fifty years or even longer.⁷

Most of the book, however, is given over to descriptions of miraculous cures effected by the internal, and external, application of urine: "Cancer of the Liver", "Acidity and other Complaints", "Vomiting and Excretion through Mouth", "Sluggish Intestine", "Diabetes and Heart Diseases", "Sciatica", "Eczema", "Pimples on the Face", "Moles on Wrists", "Ulcer on the Buttock", and "Swarthy Face".

But if, as "Golden Showers", the piss-fun anthem of the notorious multi-media Savoy empire, would have it, there's more to sex than a pair of tits, there's also more to piss than drinking it. It's not difficult to understand how it should become fetishized, because no other waste product is quite so closely associated with the sexual organs. Men, in their rough and ready way, actually use the same tube for passing urine as they do

for passing semen, but women have the greater tendency to allow sexual excitement to loosen their bladders. Think of Beatlemania and you think of mass hysteria in concert halls full of pubescent girls: distorted faces, knuckle-biting, hair-pulling, high-decibel screaming... and afterwards, according to Philip Norman's biography of the group, dozens of urine-soaked knickers discarded in situ.⁸ Touching on the early career of the thuggish Led Zeppelin road manager Richard Cole, the book *Stairway to Heaven* describes a Rolling Stones concert at the London Palladium in 1965:

Girls in the audience were absolutely hysterical – screaming, moaning, lunging toward the stage. Some even peed in their knickers, actually creating streams of water that, like the tributaries to the Mississippi, converged into a single river where the sloping seats joined the front of the stage.⁹

The step from allowing sexual excitement to cause one to piss to allowing piss to cause one sexual excitement isn't a very large one. Harold Acton, the leading light of Evelyn Waugh's Oxford days, escaped the encroaching shadow of Waugh's later fame by travelling to China and living for a time in Peking. His *Memoirs of an Aesthete*¹⁰ describe the ex-patriot community in the city, a male German member of which used to bribe the gardeners in the Imperial Gardens to substitute themselves for rain-clouds. Which raises the question of whether men's greater bladder capacities and greater powers of control make this a commoner fetish amongst the homosexual than the heterosexual or lesbian community.

Perhaps.

According to an answer in the readers' queries column of one issue of the *Gay Times* in 1992, there is actually a gay sartorial code by which urolagniacs can recognise each other. Yellow worn on the left indicates one who wishes to be pissed on, on the right one who wishes to do the pissing.¹¹

Perhaps not.

Without all the cultural baggage, piss is just warm water with a slight odour that is not unpleasant when it is fresh and comes from a healthy person.

Or so said Pat Califia in her *Lesbian S&M Safety Manual* (Alyson Publications, 1988), which devotes a small section to Water Sports.¹² Some may be surprised to learn that this term includes the administration of enemas for erotic ends, and though it's possible to agree with Califia's sentiments, one wonders if she realises exactly how much cultural baggage has to be discarded for piss to be "just warm water".

A large part of this baggage seems to be collected in volume VII of Havelock Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*,¹³ which devotes just on a hundred pages to an exhaustive investigation of the subject,



Shri Raajibhai Manibhai Patel

including six on the varying urination strategies adopted by males and females in different cultures. If one disregards local idiosyncrasies, two broad groupings can be discerned: in some races, men stand and women squat, in others men squat and women stand. Amongst the latter were the Maori, whose men said that only squatting could ensure a complete evacuation of the bladder and the avoidance of urinary problems; amongst the former were the Chinese, whose men said that, um, only standing could ensure a complete evacuation of the bladder and the avoidance of urinary problems. Elsewhere in Ellis' study the urinary symbolism of fountains is discussed, as is the underlying reason for the apparently universal tendency of women in boats to dip their hands into the water on which they are travelling.

Amongst this obsessive detail — and obsessive Ellis, as a urolagniac himself, certainly was — there is a curious omission. Despite his discussion of the religious significance of urine and urination, the former sometimes identified with semen and the latter, in its divine form, used as a symbol of the fertilisation of the earth by rain, Ellis fails to mention perhaps the most famous and obvious of all religious stories employing urinary imagery, that of Zeus and Danaë. Danaë, the daughter of Acrisius, king of Argos, was shut by her father into a bronze tower after he was told by an oracle that he would be killed by her son; Zeus fell in love with the imprisoned girl and circumvented Acrisius' attempt

to avoid fate when, in the words of Lemprière's Classical Dictionary, he

introduced himself to her bed by changing himself into a golden shower.

Correggio's treatment of the story shows Danaë lolling on a bed while a naked male angel draws out a sheet of the bed-linen to catch a stream of gold falling from a cloud that resembles a pair of buttocks. The product of the union, Perseus, would later inadvertently kill his grandfather with a discus; the union itself seems almost embarrassingly easy to interpret as a mythopoesis either of a fertility ritual involving literal urination or of a religious theory equating rain with the urine of the sky god.¹⁴

This reinterpretation of the elements of a ritual because cultural changes have made them embarrassing or unacceptable is common in the history of religion. The wine and bread eaten in the Christian Eucharist is a fairly good example: at one stage in the development of this ritual, which pre-dates Christianity by millennia,¹⁵ the literal blood and flesh of a sacrificed god-king would have been eaten. A future stage, at which the wine and bread is no longer seen as even a symbolic substitute for blood and flesh, may have been reached long ago in the ritual consumption of another common Western foodstuff.

As mentioned above, the mushroom fly agaric has psychoactive properties that persist in the urine of someone who has recently eaten it, and the consumption both of the mushroom itself and of post-prandial urine had religious significance for certain Siberian tribes. If the fly agaric was, as some academics would claim, the sacred drug *soma* of the Hindu Vedas, it becomes plausible to argue that urine-consumption has played a greater role in primitive Indo-European religion than has hitherto been recognised. The term *soma* referred both to a plant and to a drink made from this plant: if the plant was fly agaric and its users in Vedic times were aware that a psychoactively unimportant component of it called muscarine, which is responsible for unpleasant side-effects

— profuse sweating, excessive salivation, uncontrollable twitching, abdominal colic (with involuntary evacuation of the bowels and bladder), blurred vision, and respiratory depression.¹⁶

is lacking in urine, then was the "drink" made from it in fact urine? Well, yes. The most important of the Vedas, the *Rig-Veda* ("Praise-Veda") describes the rather bizarre practice of recycling the drug effect [of *soma*] by drinking the urine of the intoxicated individual.¹⁷

And this was one of the facts used by the American ethnopharmacologist R.G. Wasson to support his theory that the fly agaric was *soma* (and, one would presume, also the etymologically identical *haoma* used by the Zoroastrians of ancient Persia).

If urine consumption was, then, an important part of primitive Indo-European religious ritual, one might expect it to be subject over time to the same pressures

of euphemisation as those that turned ritual cannibalism into the ritual consumption of wine and bread. This may be exactly what happened. The Greek god Dionysus (or Bacchus, in his Roman form) was the god of wine, but his worship preserved features associated with

an earlier form of intoxicant: spruce-beer, laced with ivy, and sweetened with mead.¹⁸

Beer is a foaming translucent or cloudy liquid, often drunk warm and often tasting bitter or astringent, and has psychoactive properties. In short, it may have been a nearly perfect substitute for fly-agaric-laced urine in religious ritual when the increasing sophistication of Indo-European culture made the consumption of urine unacceptable. Before he was a god of wine, Dionysus was a god of beer

[J.E. Harrison ... pointed out (*Prolegomena* [to the Study of Greek Religion] ch. viii) that Dionysus the Wine-God was a late imposition on Dionysus the Beer-God¹⁹

and before he was a god of beer, he may have been a god of the fly agaric, and of urine-drinking.

Possible links between the cult of Dionysus and consumption of the fly agaric are obvious as soon as one begins to look for them. Robert Graves lists many in the foreword to his *The Greek Myths*, including the

senseless rioting, prophetic sight, erotic energy, and remarkable muscular strength

traditionally associated with Dionysus' female worshippers the Maenads, whose custom of tearing off the heads of their victims may, Graves continues, be an allegoric reference to the removal of the mushroom's cap from its stalk. The colour of the fly agaric's cap, which has white flecks on a bright red background, may *mutatis mutandis* underlie Dionysus' association with panthers, which drew his chariot, and which have also given their name to the common and scientific names of a close relative of the fly agaric, the panther cap or *Amanita pantherina*. This mushroom possesses the same properties and may also have been consumed in Vedic and Dionysiac ritual,²⁰ and later, like fly agaric, re-cycled in the form of urine. In either case, we might expect urine consumption to be present in disguised form in the Dionysus myth, particularly in the story of his birth — and yes, it does seem to be there.

Dionysus was the son of Zeus and the mortal woman Semele, who was six months pregnant with Dionysus when she was persuaded by Zeus's jealous wife Hera to ask that he reveal himself to her in his true divine form. Reluctantly, Zeus did so, and Semele was struck dead on the spot. The unborn Dionysus was taken from her body and sewed up in Zeus's thigh by Hermes, being born three months later and given the name of

'twice-born' or 'the child of the double-door'²¹

The psychoactivity of fly agaric is "twice-born": when the mushroom is eaten, and when the urine it affects is drunk. "Thigh", furthermore, is sometimes used as a euphemism for the penis: these verses in Genesis

And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all he, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh [yerekh]. And I will make thee swear by the LORD... [xiv 2-3]

refer to an ancient form of oath in which the hand was held to the genitals, in this case of him to whom one was swearing.²² The Greek word for "thigh", *méros*, is not given a secondary meaning of "penis" in Liddell & Scott's great A Greek-English Lexicon, but it is related to the Latin word *membrum*, which, as the descent of it into English as "member" shows, did have this secondary meaning.²³

Dionysus' birth from the thigh of Zeus, then, may ultimately refer to the passing of urine by the chief worshipper during the second stage of a fly-agaric ritual: the myth's use of "thigh" is euphemistic, as in Genesis, or arose at a later period when literal urine consumption



was unacceptable but a substitute, beer, was poured in imitation of urination from a vessel held close to the thigh of the chief worshipper. Beer that tastes like piss may be exactly where a truly traditionalist Campaign for Real Ale should be taking us, and under the guidance of a truly traditionalist CAMRA being "pissed" would reclaim what is perhaps its original meaning anyway.

Pint of the *real* amber nectar, anyone?

NOTES

1. *The Encyclopedia of Psychoactive Drugs: Mushrooms/Psychedelic Fungi*, Peter E. Furst, Burke Publishing, London, 1988, pgs. 61-65
2. Thinking about it now, though, I suppose that drinking one's own urine only replaces salt, doesn't add it. (I'd be grateful if someone could supply fuller details of the book in question.)
3. *Manev Mootra. Auto-Urine Therapy. A treatise on Urine for universal health*, Bharat Sevak Samaj Publications, Ahmedabad, India, 1973.
4. Quotation from *Water of Life* on pg. 65 of *Manev Mootra*
5. *Ibid.*, pg. 66-7
6. pg. 14
7. pg. 17
8. Philip Norman, *Shout!*
9. *Stairway to Heaven. Led Zeppelin Uncensored*, Richard Cole with Richard Trubo, Simon & Schuster, London, 1992, introduction, pg. xvii. A useful corrective for anyone tempted to take either Led Zeppelin or their music seriously.
10. Methuen & Co., London, 1948.
11. I don't remember the issue, but other codes are blue for fellatio (worn on the left indicates that one wishes to fellate, on the right that one wishes to be fellated), green

- for rent-boys (worn anywhere) and red for S&M (on the left, indicates that one wish to be the bottom in spanking or light S&M, on the right, that one wishes to be the top in heavy S&M).
12. pg. 62
 13. *Eonism & Other Supplimentary Studies*, Philadelphia, 1928, pgs. 376 to 476
 14. According to *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (ed. Peter Davies, Dell Publishing, New York, 1970), the word "mist" comes from a Germanic root "mih-" meaning "urine, rain". The underlying Indo-European root "meigh-" presumably re-entered English in the Latin "micturate".
 15. The Christian apologist C.S. Lewis claimed that one should not be surprised to find paganism anticipating Christianity because God was, as it were, preparing the way. The Christian anti-apologist Voltaire provided a very neat reply to this kind of teleological argument when he remarked that it was obvious that faces were designed for spectacles
 16. "In very large doses", but these symptoms can be apparently expected in lesser form on consumption of fresh specimens of fly agaric. op. cit. pg. 65
 17. Section on fly agaric use in S.A. Maisto et al, *Drug Use & Misuse*,

Fort Worth, Texas, 1991.

18. *The Greek Myths* 1, Robert Graves, note 2 to section 27, "Dionysus' Nature & Deeds".
19. *Ibid.*, note 3.
20. The application of the word to a fungus is at least as old as the career of the Swedish mycologist Elias Magnus Fries (1794-1878), who devised the original form of the scientific name *Amanita pantherina* ("DC ex Fries", *Poisonous Plants: a colour field guide*, Lucia Woodward, David & Charles, 1985). "Panther's piss" is given in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a slang term for a strong liquor.
21. Graves, sec. 14, "Births of Hermes, Apollo, Artemis & Dionysus".
22. In the words of Peake's *Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Arthur S. Peake M.A., D.D., Thomas Nelson, Edinburgh, 1937: "... Abraham summons his senior slave and extracts from him a solemn oath, in contact with the organs which are the sacred seat of life ..." (pg. 155).
23. Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase & Fable* says: "The Arabian tradition is that the infant Bacchus was nourished during infancy in a cave of Mount Meros. As 'Meros' is Greek for a thigh, the Greek fable is readily explained."

KODAK FROM THE GRAVE

the photographs of andres serrano and joel-peter witkin

Douglas Baptie

Edinburgh in August: cue an influx of aesthetes from all corners of the globe for the city's annual arts festival, every single one of them hoping for a little bit of edification, the lucky break or just the chance to cop-off with some Australian mime artiste. As an added bonus for 1995, Scotland's capital also served as European City of Punk, forcing bemused Japanese tourists to step over prostrate Belgian anarchists in addition to running the usual gamut of musicians, jugglers and street theatre troupes.

As regular as the festival itself is the belligerent reaction by at least one local elected representative to some part of the programme, usually the Jim Rose Circus or a late-night lesbian cabaret where one of the participants exposes a breast for a few seconds. This year though, the lucky recipient of all the attention was American artist Andres Serrano and his exhibition of photographs 'The Morgue and Other Works' at the Portfolio Gallery.

Best known for his *Piss Christ* depicting a crucifix bathed in a glorious golden hue (later revealed to be the artist's own urine), Serrano has since been targeted in the sometimes bloody debate over continued Federal funding of the arts. Despite (or perhaps because of) the continued attention, some of his other projects — *The Klan*, *Guns*, *The Church* — have continued to court controversy while almost acting like a checklist for the pet obsessions of his American home. 'The Morgue...' appears to be a natural extension to Serrano's turbulent career.

All the local newspaper inches concentrated on the



Andres Serrano 'The Morgue and Other Works'

use of real corpses in the part of the exhibition that gave it its name. Taken during a three-month period at an anonymous location, these supposedly near-blasphemous works inevitably turned out to be nothing of the sort, being instead a fairly respectful display of body parts that made a mockery of the political posturing that preceded their arrival.

While initially imposing, the most successful of these large (maybe 4' x 5') prints reveal most with some careful study: the indentations left by a pair of socks on the legs of an infant (*Meningitis Victim*); the way fresh white skin seems to have grown up under the peeling black pigment of *Killed By Police: Jane Doe*; the wrist wounds of *Knifed To Death* that look like 'defence wounds' inflicted when the arms were held up in front of the body, but are the *wrong way round* and could only have occurred when the victim's arms were at his side (after death?).

From these few isolated images comes an abiding sense of spirituality — indeed, the two *Knifed To Death* prints were deliberately hung in a way so that they would recall Michelangelo's *The Creation of Adam* (as seen on *The South Bank Show*, I think) — and of extinguished possibility. Even when Serrano slips into the realms of cliché by printing all the subjects onto jet-black backgrounds so that we can see ourselves reflected back in these images of death, there is still much to admire even in the less interesting photos; just on a technical level they're exquisitely printed — every pore and tiny hair clearly visible. '...And Other Works' proved less satisfying with four similarly sized works drawn from Serrano's time in Budapest. Two photographs of servicemen unintentionally recall the campy of Jeff Koons and only a shot of a mother and her baby sticks in the mind. Although it resembles a hundred other similar scenes, the barest hint of the waist-band of her jeans creeps into the bottom of the frame, clashing with the rest of her nakedness, creating an anomalous feeling similar to that left by the best 'Morgue...' photos.

Maud Sulter, writing in a recent issue of *Portfolio*, calls Serrano '...a prophet, changing the lives of those who see his work' which is plainly rot. What he is though, besides being a master technician, is a media-friendly bridge into the underground. Serrano's subjects may be obvious, too premeditated, too deliberately

designed to titillate the liberal arts establishment while infuriating middle America, but his work frequently transcends the ring-side furore. Always human, occasionally uplifting, rarely anything other than fascinating.

Arguably more problematic is Joel-Peter Witkin. Scots were given a rare opportunity to view some of the controversial artist's work first hand as part of the nation-wide 'Fotofeis' festival which laudably takes photography exhibitions not just to the city galleries but to smaller rural locales too. This year's festival had three main thematic strands: migration, city and mortality, and it was the last of these that brought Witkin's work to Edinburgh's Stills Gallery through October and into November.

Even though I'd seen some of Witkin's work in magazines, there's no denying how troubling some of them are when viewed from a few feet away: the severed head of *A Dead Man* sits on a silver platter; *Portraits From the Afterworld* has two heads, the tops sliced off 'boiled egg'-style to reveal the empty cavities; the crudely stitched, post-autopsy corpse of a six-month old child sitting among severed hands and feet, bunches of grapes, squid, pomegranates: a proverbial *Feast of Fools*. Other photographs feature the corpses of animals — I seem to recall *Dog on a Pillow* being nothing of the sort. Wasn't it a bull's head? Or was it just a bit of a dog? — or real-life (and live...) 'freaks': a female dwarf and a billy goat get to act-out *Daphne and Apollo*; an achingly beautiful transsexual stares into the camera, a tiny dog sits on a trestle at his/her side — *Man With Dog* (naturally enough...).

Biographers have tried to explain Witkin's apparent morbidity with reference to events in his life. At the age of six he discovered a crashed car and watched fascinated as the severed head of a small girl rolled across the road in front of him. Later, when drafted into the army during the Vietnam war, he trained as a combat photographer documenting suicides, accidents and the casualties of war.

For himself, Witkin says 'I do not make work to

disturb people... I photograph death because it is a part of life. I look forward to dying because I think living on earth, on this plane, is one part of existence, and death is another part, and that we are constantly learning through the process."

Yet while Witkin's intentions may be valid, sometimes his methods and means seem less so. One notable aspect of Witkin's photos is the way he 'doctors' them with the use of sepia tones, scratches on the negatives or by putting gauzes and paper over the print during development to create what appears to be 'Modern Victoriana'. Writing in the programme notes, Mark Durden suggests 'This mock historicity is there to temporally distance us from the scenes depicted, reduce

them to spectacle, foster our delectation rather than critique and worse, help blinker us from the real denigrations and abuses which this work involves'. Indeed, one wonders whether Witkin consciously (or otherwise) dates his work in this way because of guilt. Their dog-eared nature denies Witkin's culpability: we are led to believe they come from another time (and place) where life was cheap. Witkin is absolved. Similarly, does he choose to work in Mexico, for example, because he finds it easier to facilitate his *exploitation d'art* there — these corpses have to come from somewhere — or is he simply trying to tap into an alternative cultural conception of death, as witnessed at another exhibition during Fotofeis' 'Black Butterfly':



Portrait From The Afterworld: Madame David.

Joel-Peter Witkin

Images of Death from Mexico' in which an almost carnival atmosphere was depicted?

It would be foolish to deny that Witkin's work can be incredibly breathtaking and he has an eye for composition that compares with the 'Old Masters'. Yet it remains difficult to accept the actual content of specific photographs. Witkin's lack of sanctity for the dead, the way he reduces the body to the status of fruit, say, to be cut up and arranged, seems highly suspect given that the issue of consent is decidedly murky. We may look at Witkin's work and be re-assured, surprised even, that such beauty can emerge from such horror. It seems likely, however, that our comfort comes at a price: the dignity and peace of another.

CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH PORN-EATER

writing for Britain's top-shelf
porn titles

Andy Darlington

You like Sex, Filth, Debauchery,
Blow-Jobs, Tits, Clits, Nympho
Nurses, Groupies? Read on...

3:00am in Room 107 in this Manchester Hotel. And the Funk Band are strewn around this L-shaped bedroom for an interview and an item-by-item breakdown of the torrid gig they've just delivered at the city-centre club. I'm sat on a circular red velvet stool talking and taping while the gig still replays in my head. Linton, the intimidatingly fit drummer is built like a Boxer, his voice deep with a thick Rasta lilt. The vocalist, Flip, a stage hipster oozing cat-cool, is contrastingly quiet, while the two foxy back-up singers - Clare and Lindsay in short brothel-red costumes - remove makeup carefully with pads of cotton wool. We get to analysing the group in some detail, while Flip loses interest, moving away to flirt with Clare, seizing her suggestively from behind and biting the smooth brown skin of her neck. There's booze aplenty, and the other indulgences associated with the life-style. Things start blurring a little at the edges of my mind, but the tape machine's still coiling it all in. I'm shaping questions and getting carefully contrived answers while, from the corner of my eye, through a haze of illegal substances, I see Flip and Clare now chewing each other's tongues, and what's holding her tunic-top in place a centimetre from the outer rim of her nipples is something worth pondering on. Linton gets into a breakdown of band influences while Flip and Clare melt just out of eye-shot around the room's L-shape, but the sounds coming around that corner set up images I can't fight. Keyboardist Jerry is telling me how the group formed, and... the sounds of rhythmically creaking bedsprings, synchronised to spurts of excited breathing set up odd reactions in my y-fronts as I try to concentrate and struggle to ask intelligent questions. Clare's groans now come so clear and sensual it's all I can

do to conceal my embarrassingly angry erection, but no-one else seems to notice, they're smoking, drinking, talking.

And later... in the car home, I replay the interview tape so loud the sound of Clare's orgasm drowns out the engine noise, and I'm erecting all over again.

THE DAY THE WORLD TURNED DAYGLO —

Knave, Vol. 17, No. 10

During the time I've been writing for the music press and *Headpress* magazine, I've also contributed to what is euphemistically called the 'Adult Market'. Those Soft-Core Porn-U-Like Top-Shelf magazines where sex and text form incendiary combinations. And sometimes themes can cross over from one to the other.

The story about Flip and Clare grew out of a genuine band interview, obsessives can check back-issues of *Hot Press* to discover who lurks behind the alias. But when this extract appeared in *Knave* (October 1985) an interesting, and perhaps Freudian misprint on the publisher's part, re-named the Funk Band the *Fuck Band*!

I began my ventures into Porn publishing, or my penetration (nudge, nudge) of the soft-porn market because — if Brian Aldiss, Mick Farren, Jack Kerouac, Henry Miller, Guy N Smith, Philip Jose Farmer, Ian Watson and Michael Butterworth could do it — then why not me? Erotic fantasy operates from the same escapist/wishful fulfilment well-spring of the imagination that Science Fiction does. It's a form of fantasy that can be used with as much originality as any other form of imaginative fiction. The Joys of Sex can be mixed with the Joys of Text, and the results can stimulate all manner of exciting reactions, intellectual and physical.

After all "masturbation is the thinking man's television" said Christopher Hampton in 1970. And in Soft-Porn, arousal is the reaction you're provoking. All good things end in a come. People say "does writing Porn get you feeling horny?" Of course it does. If your own writing doesn't get you with hard-on, how do you expect it to have that effect on your reader? It's arousing because that's the object of the game. And it can be difficult typing with an approaching critical mass tenting your underwear out of shape.

Ian Pemble, a former editor of *Knave* admits "personally, I just don't like stories about sex. Could this be an advanced case of aversion therapy? I think I should be told." Me, I've always been addicted. I'm a compulsive Porn-Eater of long standing. Don't talk to me about obsessive lusts. I've been there. I know the scene. I got the wrist strain to prove it. And if the aversion therapy principle operates I can't say I've noticed its effects so far. Loud Rock 'n' Roll, cheap Science Fiction, and Under-the-Counter Girlie mags wrecked my adolescent head, and destroyed any potential I may ever have had of success in academia. The nudie girls who (un)dressed to impress in *Razzle*, *Spick*, and *Parade* may have been less anatomically specific and stronger on implied suggestion than the tawdry allure of the gusset-bustin' Babes in equivalent publications today, but they still succeeded in reaching

parts of my body that other literatures did not.

It was an obvious next step to strip-mine such a grubby heritage in a positive way. Instead of wasting wank-fantasies in furtive solitary indulgence, why not write them down and send them out to illuminate other lives? My first adventure into eroticism was a story called 'Modern As Mary Quant', published in *Mayfair* (Vol.2 No.20 in February 1985). From a title provided by Martin (ABC) Fry, the fictional action slurps back to 1960s Swinging London, name-checking Antonioni's movie, *Blowup*, and infiltrating Yardbirds lyrics, then it chases up the scene's survivors into the then-current 1980s, where a former model is blackmailed into having sex over some indiscreet photos taken during her Cat-Walk days — until she turns it all around to her advantage. There are blow-jobs. There is much steamy humping. "Your technique makes an unlikely and barely believable plot into a story that readers may enjoy. I am happy to offer you £150 for First British Rights" comments the editor. And thus encouraged, sales to *Knave*, *Erotic Stories*, *Desire*, *Exclusive*, *Risque*,

Journal Of Love and elsewhere followed, and follow.

'Tales From A Shoebox' in *Knave* (June 1985) is even more directly autobiographical — a personal flashback to great 'Dirty Books I have read' during "an adolescence troubled with obstinate risings and stiffness of the groin". My original title, 'The Sexual Samizdat', was retitled because the editor "had to look



the last word up in a dictionary", but the word-count pulls in capsule plot-lines of forgotten anonymously-produced porn "written with half a brain and read with one hand... yet there are word-pictures from that great trove of vintage licentiousness welded indelibly to the inner linings of my brain just as vividly as anything from the mainstream presses". I stand by that twisted confession. And more — there's even social value in up-fronting it. You are not alone. Everybody wanks. We all do that five-finger sticky-palmed shuffle. Fashion in what is acceptable and politically correct in the gender area changes. But the appetite for Porn is a constant. And sharing that admission can be therapeutic.

You like Sex with Eels, Sex with Pigs, Troilism, S/M, Onanism, Mighty Loveshafits, Naughty Nugs? Read on...

With no copyright, no traceable address or point of origin, so down-market they could barely make the cut-price basement, the Sexual Samizdat felt itself sufficiently immune from prosecution to pursue and

exploit (with diligent thoroughness) every dodgy avenue of fetish and pervy fantasy. It was here I was puzzled to first discover flagellation, bondage and torture. While not adverse to a little fictional spanking as a hors d'oeuvre I felt cheated to find that — after a detailed catalogue of reddening buttocks, swinging canes, open-palm slaps, welts, whacks and bruising blows, the novel's only actual penetration was relegated to a perfunctory middle paragraph on the penultimate page! I marginally preferred *The Great White Swallow* in which two 'Midnight Cowboys' hire themselves out to a wealthy but grotesquely obese canine-obsessed heiress. She has them perform doggy-fashion on two obediently nude serving wenches while she — clad only in thigh-high boots, choreographs each copulatory grunt and thrust with flicks of a Ring-Master's whip. She also signals the... wait for it... exact moment when their co-ordinated ejaculations should occur. Miraculously they're both able to deliver the goods on schedule to the admiring appreciation of all three female participants.

THE SEXUAL SAMIZDAT —

Knave, Vol. 17, No. 6

There's a widespread misapprehension about erotic publishing today, allied to a belief in the supposed liberalisation of censorship, that vile filth-merchants can get away with portraying any sexual act or perversion their twisted depravity can envisage. This is far from true. There's a complex code of nudges and winks governing what is and what is not admissible. "Sex should be enjoyable for all concerned and entered into willingly" explains the Editorial Guidelines for Virgin's erotic paperback imprint, *Nexus*. It goes on to list "elements unacceptable in works of erotic fiction such as incest, underage sex, murder, rape, bestiality, necrophilia, and blood-letting". It adds that "even the recipients of punishment must not gain pleasure from the experience. Tragic/unpleasant elements detract from eroticism. There's no place in *Nexus* Books for violence or death". So much is obvious.

But in other areas, other no-no's are less so. "We do not, as a company, use mention of real people," cautions Peter Jacobs of the more down-market *Journal Of Love*. "We always avoid references to, say... 'She had hair like Kim Basinger or Glynis Barber, lips like Linda Lovelace or Monroe, etc.' My managing editor once even deleted a reference to Hitler on the same grounds!"

So how, exactly, are the nebulous zones of the libido to be defined? What about... coercion? Joanna Payne — the highly unlikely-named editor of the monthly *Erotic Stories* delineates it more fully. "We are not allowed to print stories which deal with anything illegal, including under-age sex, anal sex between men and women, bestiality, and anything which features extreme violence or appears to glorify rape or the use of force in a sexual encounter. However, as for the idea of coercing women we have to be very careful on this, and I for one certainly wouldn't print an explicit rape story, as I don't consider that to be entertainment. But a lot of people do have mild coercion fantasies, either in their heads or on

HEADPRESS

paper, so it's just a matter of knowing where to draw the line."

Can there be ethical Porn? When I began, anticipating disapproval from feminist friends, I rehearsed mitigations. First, I can't vouch for the rest of the magazine, but I can establish ground rules for my own pages therein. Secondly, my stuff doesn't treat women as passive sex toys, honest. Rather it exploits the comic absurdity of the inept slobbering male need for fantastically dirty imaginary sex. And anyway, it's a Feminist myth that male Porn exclusively deals in submissive passive women. Married men are major Porn consumers, and it's marital female sexual passivity they're turning to Porn to escape from! And I only ever had one critic anyway — a male poet who attacked me for 'squandering my talent writing trash'. He probably resents the size of my paycheques. Poetry just can't compete with filth! While women, oddly, find the details of my forays into pornucopia intriguing... and, in at least one case, even arousing.

Analysing it further, Porn mags are production-lines of immaculate Bimbos who tweak and toy with your erogenous hot-zones, but provides no physical contact. They give the illusion of intimacy, but no sensation of flesh. A void of theoretical rumpy-pumpy, accessed through compulsive voyeuristic page-turning, resulting only in awkward trouser stick-ups. Porn provides sex direct from issue to tissue, direct from strain to messy stain. Pornography and reader co-operate through the willing go-between of lust and masturbation, between drives and juices.

So who reads this stuff anyway? Who are the consumers? According to Joanna, "We work on the theory that our readers are roughly between the ages of 21 and 50, and fairly evenly divided between men and women. So we are allowed to be explicit in the language we use. But the erotic content should be sensual rather than crude. Ian Pemble, as editor of *Knave*, accepted much of my stuff through the mid-80s. He defined his policy as "Knave is meant to be light, amusing, entertaining, and sexy. It is not meant to have anything to do with real life. Escapism rules, okay? Forget real life!"

Think of it this way. The first book ever printed was the Gutenberg Bible. The second was a Medieval Pillow Book. Among the earliest-ever practical uses for the camera was to photograph often prepubescent Victorian nudes. And as soon as pictures started moving, there was filmic nudity and blurry amateur sex-acts on jump-frame screens. Same with the introduction of video. And now, is it really necessary to draw yet more attention to computer and on-line Net Porn? The long and short of it (no phallic pun intended) is that the advent of every major new technological innovation in communicating images has immediately been accompanied by a spin-off sexual dimension. People like Porn. They get off on it. It's a universal prurience that crosses all cultures and centuries.

What can the poor potential Porn scribe do about it? Wrangle with the endless ethical equations of its social immorality, agonise with his conscience over the ins and outs of its political correctness? Or just fill a gap in

the market quick before someone else does? It's fantasy. A mode of storytelling. Problem is, it's that kind of fantasy that laps over into people's lives.

"You'd be surprised, or perhaps you wouldn't, by how much some people read significance into anything we print," confides a former editor of *Mayfair*.

When I write Porn I put my own name on it. When I write through a female persona — which I occasionally do — my by-line indicates that this is a male writing through a female guise. It's when these male/female and fact/fantasy interfaces blur that I'd accept a certain element of social risk. I was propositioned by a magazine which I'll leave nameless. They made the offer thus: "We run three explicitly sexual 'Confessions' per issue, each one around 1500 words, ostensibly by women of course, frustrated urban housewives, that sort of thing. Ideally they should be written to show a certain naïveté, the supposed writers are not meant to be professionals — but if you fancy having a go at these pot-boilers you're welcome." I declined.

Porn is a licence to erotomania. In your head all women might be nymphs lusting for your pocket-rocket. And such fantasy is the safest sex around, so long as it's confined to the interior of your head. But these 'Confessions' are, (a) written by men but supposedly by women, and (b) fantasy masquerading as truth. Some readers — those who 'read significance into anything we print', just might believe such wank-prose, then compare their own shabby miserable lives with the profligate knicker-free non-menstruating never-say-no alleged women of these fictional virtual unrealities. There's the rub, or the 'frottage' to use its fetishist jargon. The reader looks across at his frumpy wife, girlfriend or partner, makes unfavourable comparisons with the sexually voracious cock-sucking ever-open pussies on the (semen-spattered) page, and feels there's a global orgy going on outside the door that he's missing out on. All that furious sex that he's excluded from.

Porn is very much to do with your subconscious life and with your own fantasies about yourself. It is a sterile disease-free recreational refuge for playful mind-games. An elaborate charade of 'Adult! Let's Pretend. A mutual conspiracy of suspended disbeliefs: she is available, he is there to take advantage of her availability. But both roles are fictitious. Porn can be a stimulant. An aphrodisiac to pleasurable arouse and expand the sensual horizons of both (or even all three) participants. But if it moves into areas of one partner forcibly imposing impossible expectations on the other, that's when I quit.



I've been reading vintage 1940s erotica by Henry Miller again on his centennial. Sex in Paris will never be that good again. Totally self-indulgent. Guilt-free. Irresponsible. But of course, I don't delude myself that it's real. And today, while we're talking credibility and authenticity, Lesley Sharrock of the high-gloss *Desire* says "I enjoy your fiction, very imaginative and amusing, but unfortunately it isn't sufficiently 'erotic' in the trite sense of the word". Elsewhere, complaining of word-length over-run problems on another story, she suggests "you could lose a little of the Music Biz material without sacrificing the authentic flavour you've created, and without losing choice phrases like 'blowing ciggy smoke into her fluffed-up pubes so they steam and fume like a tropical rain-forest'". Here we are entering the nebulous zones where it's a matter 'of knowing where to draw the line'. There has to be enough plot to carry and legitimise the sex action, but not so much that it intrudes into the wank potential. This magazine is, after all, meant to be read with one hand.

And even when staying within the restrictions of these rules, there can be disturbingly distasteful no-go areas. I wrote a sufficiently trite pot-boiler called 'Lucky At Cards'. The storyline, what there is of it, involves mate-trading, partner-swapping. He wants to. At first she's less enthusiastic. The ironic content, or what's intended to be the plot-twist, is that once they actually set up the four-way sex and do the dirty deed, he can't quite rise to the occasion, but she actually gets off on it so much that she moves out, and goes to live with the new lover. Sure, it ain't exactly Kafka or Balzac, but it's mildly amusing. And to invest the fictional ciphers with an added element of character I make the new guy, Dean, a Caribbean, for no particular reason other than to vary the cast-list a little. But it's here the objections begin. Again I'm not allowed to specify the journal by name. But you've seen it loitering on the top-shelf with lecherous intent. "We like stories to start off with the hard action," chides the editor, "you can bring the scenario into focus later by 'flashback' — and NONE of the guys EVER fails to score. Further point, Dean is a no-no. Call 'em racist if you like, but our punters don't like Caribbean characters doing down Caucasians. So have another go at the story, with no characters failing to score this time."

I don't believe the punters are racist. It's this condescending and patronising editorial policy that stinks. And no, I refused to re-write. The story eventually found a publisher elsewhere... in its original form. But you get the picture? Porn is ideologically unsound. It is exploitative. An urgent hard-on has no moral conscience. It merely reacts to stimuli. It by-passes the rational discriminative centres of the brain and goes for those vilest bestial beasts wallowing in the deepest mires of the subconscious. The ones that can relate to



the life force at its rawest, crudest and most primal. Cut the crap about finding an 'ethical Porn'. Porn deals in bodies. Not minds.

But that doesn't mean it's incapable of change. Women write Porn too. Increasingly so. About half the contributors to *Erotic Stories* are female, and there's a little Mills & Boon coyness about the way they write. In fact they deal in Master/Slave bondage scenes and Dominance/ Submission themes that their male counterparts are no longer allowed to get away with. For a woman to write explicit erotic fantasy is to break the restraints of repressive social convention, to express the previous inexpressible, to break taboos and expand the possibilities of their gender. A man

who writes Porn is still a dirty old sod.

The prohibition on a Gay male content in mainstream Porn can be equally illogical. There's now a thriving Gay press with its own audience and conventions. But the apartheid stopping its cross-over into general erotic publishing remains. During Ian Pemble's regime, "even if I didn't have that editorial policy in mind already, our distributors would refuse to handle us if I transgressed against their 'guidelines' which, for instance, preclude any mention or depiction of anything remotely homosexual. Yes, I know it's been overlooked by societies for centuries as far as Gay ladies are concerned, and it's legal for consenting males over 21, in private. But like I said, forget real life."

With *Erotic Stories*, Joanna Payne has managed to expand the spectrum of choice by infiltrating an occasional tale with a Gay theme — "stories with a Gay/Lesbian theme, or those which deal with mild Bondage/S&M are acceptable as long as it is made clear that both partners are willing participants." But limits remain. A group sex scene of mine had to be 'modified' — "although I found the situation and characters really intriguing, because of the stupid laws in this country, I can't print a scene where a man has oral sex with another man while a woman is present. As this isn't exactly an incidental detail in the story, I'm having to return it in the hope you can find a way of implying the act without actually describing it."

Like the feature on the Funk Band/Fuck Band, the stylus must be changed to protect the record. So what if a guy gets a Blow-Job from a Transvestite, and doesn't realise that within those fancy knickers there lies a set of fancy knackers, until the very end of the story? The restrictions on writing Soft-Core Top-Shelf Porn-U-Like can be illogical sometimes. But desire and fantasy are the ingredients that hold the industry together like the staples in a centrefold. And human sexual diversity means you still end up with more variables and options than even the CD-ROM Encyclopaedia Britannica can cope with. And that's what makes it fun. Still.

CULTURE GUIDE

More quality goods (and not-so-goods) from the four corners of the globe. Reviews by Karekes & Slater unless otherwise stated.

MAGAZINES

Modern Satanism For Girls

No.1 [24pp price? Ben Dubois, 1720 Westmount Road NW, Calgary, AB. T2N 3M3, Canada]

The dictum here is that 'Modern Satanism is not a religion but rather an attitude, a philosophy that ascribes to the maintenance of balance as a manner of daily life'. And if that sounds deep, you'd be sorely mistaken thinking that this miniature pamphlet affair was going to be an exercise in logistics. It's psychobabble alright, but of a purely juvenile kind. Perhaps artist and writer Ben Dubois was trying to impress his cheerleader classmates with *Modern Satanism*, proffering comical (but unfunny) dos and don'ts and fashion-tips (for girls) courtesy of big bad Beetzabub — after all, why else bother if not to get into girls' pants? Without point, as they say



Sex, Shocks & Sadism!

An A-Z Guide To Erotic Horror Films On Videocassette

Todd Tjersland [92pp \$19.95 US / \$24.95 Foreign 1995 Threat Theatre International, PO Box 7633, Olympia, WA 98507-7633, USA]

First off, let's get it straight: Despite author Todd Tjersland's claims to the contrary, *Sex, Shocks & Sadism!* is a magazine not a book. And at \$19.95 a pop, a fucking expensive mag at that. Oh yes, wait until this baby comes slipping through your letter box, mail-order, won't you be the ass for having parted with so many of your hard-earned greenbacks. Tjersland is the



brains behind Threat Theatre, an outfit specialising in 'quality videos at affordable prices for the serious collector of sleaze cinema' — everything from hardcore porn-bizarre compilations like *Fish-Fucking Freaks*, to Jap sleaze and Godzilla flicks. With such a wealth of material at his disposable, it's a crime that Tjersland should come up with a 'guide' as pitiful as *Sex, Shocks & Sadism!* Ultra-obscure titles are awarded a 'review' so basic as to be virtually interchangeable with half of the other movies under discussion, while common poop like *Sliver* and *Body Double* are treated to comparatively lengthy plot details. After slapping out 20 bucks on something claiming itself to be the 'most shocking & controversial video review book ever written' (by 'America's newest king of horror journalism', no less), the last thing you want is coverage of brain-numbingly familiar titles, particularly when the author is providing absolute zilch by way of (further) insight. What's more, so many of Tjersland's facts are wrong. His appraisals of movies are also very misleading: is overuse of hyperbole — nearly everything is either "unbelievable" or "shocking" — leads one naturally to the conclusion that the book is nothing but a 92-page plug for Threat Theatre's own video stock. Check out the Threat Theatre catalogue that comes 'free' with the book — heck, nearly all the same titles are included therein, for sale at 'affordable prices' (All of Threat Theatre's own sampler tapes — though not identified as such — are awarded four stars in *Sex, Shocks & Sadism!*, four stars being 'The Ultimate!'). The photos throughout are lifted from the TV screen, for that grainy *what da*

fuck? look (worthless even as wank fodder, as someone recently noted). On the whole, an annoying piece of shit that fails in every department... buy Crack instead

Conitruion

No.2 [12pp Free to Contributors. Lives of the Secular Saints, BM Judgement, London, WC1N 3XX]

More confessions from the 'sex-pain archive'. The latest issue of this slim, curious endeavour — true stories of a couple hundred words each — features a visit to a prostitute ('Well, if I've got to wear a rubber [for a hand job]," I said, "How much extra to fuck you?"), a gent who places ads in contact mags for when his wife is away, with gentlemen callers coming over unbeknownst to her ('I was surprised to find he was wearing stockings and panties'), and numerous other Sub/Dom-type shenanigans. There is also an editorial of sorts whose bottom line warns the reader of a possible pending anti-SM backlash. However, quite how this apothecosis has been determined is rather vague — the analogies do add up after a fashion, but could easily (and dangerously) be misconstrued. Citing that Brady and Hindley's court appearance in the Sixties, for instance, was accompanied by crowds actually *anxious* of the couple, is not a comfortable nor altogether clear pointer to be leading your defence. SM backlash? You bet.

Bypass

No.6 [36pp £1.50. PO Box 148, Hove, BN3 3DQ]

The latest issue of this zine-review-zine has found itself a visually solid, pleasing layout with Slab-O-Concrete now at the helm. For those not familiar with Bypass, the most immediate and accurate comparable would be a European counterpart to *Factsheet 5*. Though it has some way to go to match the sheer volume of that publication, Bypass is covering some new bases in itself. Basically, the thing offers a review and contact/order details for every small press publication that it receives. Titles are listed throughout in alphabetical order (doing away with sectioning). But the clincher is that while many of the 500-plus reviews are informative and enlightening, many more are utterly worthless. Issue #2 of it's *A Tabloid World*, for example, is reviewed thus: "Clipping, columns, interviews." What kind of fucking review is that for a reviews zine? It's impossible to determine an 'unknown quantity' (a la the majority of titles

contained in *Bypass*) when given such non-committal by-lines (columns of what? interviews with whom? clippings of toenails?). Before long the reader finds themselves skipping over these soundbites altogether in pursuit of meatier morsels. That said, you won't come away from *Bypass* without wanting to excavate something a little deeper.

Screw Comix

No 3 [42pp \$3.95. Edge Publishing] It's been four years (and a change of publisher) since the launch of Al Goldstein's *Screw Comix*. Issue three includes material by Bill Ward, Danny Hellman and Spain, and continues to provide a welcome PC-ignorant detour for those who seek something a little more squalid in their 'Adult' comics. *Prick Racey* gets a hard-on after filling gangsters full of lead, then fills *Breasty Mahoney's* face full of the white stuff. *Edgar Wanker* has masturbated so much that all his skin mags have upped and left him. *Patience and Prudence* are two girls whose name-calling leads to cat-fighting leads to lesbian sex. Though most strips appear to be the result of a heavy beer session and hours of video porn without once jacking off, there are a couple of instances of lucidity to be had. However, the whole thing is a trifle piddling in content (particularly when considering how long it's taken to get this issue out) and suffers from an abundance of filler, courtesy the full-page 'etchings' of Stu Mead, P. Reeves and Renee French. And hey, a page of traditional comic-style ads for nonsense goods — what a novelty. On the whole, an enjoyable distraction, but then it isn't that difficult to appreciate anything as inane and foul-mouthed as *Screw Comix* in this clinically tried-and-tested day and age.

The Common Denominator sex is... No 1 [52pp £7 UK / \$10 US. ComDenom. PO Box 108, Marlybone High Street, London, W1M 3DE] The debut number of a kind of off-shoot of *Quim* magazine, with a clumsy mouthful of a title (ComDenom for short, padre) and an emphasis on Queer. As with *Quim*, the layout is overly busy and much of the fiction could be lost with no one being any the wiser (though the tale 'Grandad Gang Bang' is decidedly askew and for that reason alone can stay). The most intriguing aspect of this debut issue is the piece on *Anel Sex*, which amalgamates under general headings short anecdotes and opinions from anonymous individuals. Some choice examples: *FIRST EXPERIENCE* — 'When some 15 year old boy put his prick up my erse, mistaking it for my cunt.'

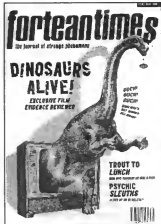
SMELL — 'I like my cum and my lover's BO end ess smells but I am afraid of getting shit on myself. It happened once and we laughed about it but I think it freaked us out too and it was ages until we tried that again.' *MOST RECENT EXPERIENCE* — 'Dildo in anus, first in cunt.' *LICK ARSE? HOW WHEN & WHAT* — 'I love to lick ass. I love to tongue fuck ass. I dig deep into a bum hole and taste that slimy trough.' *SAFER ANAL SEX?* — 'No exchange of bodily fluids, don't do it if fingers are cut. Cereful not to graze my lover's haemorrhoids (I).'

Celebrate The Self

Vol. IV, No. 2 [20pp \$3.50. PO Box 8888, Mobile, Alabama 36689, USA] 'Having been masturbated by both sexes, I've observed a difference in technique between men and women — men invariably use my foreskin to masturbate me, while the majority of women strip my foreskin back and work directly on my cock-head.' (The exception to this being professional 'masseuses'.) So begins the most recent issue of the newsletter devoted to the 'solo sex enthusiast'. Twenty pages of news, views and experiences. Did you know that 30 percent of 300,000 men to have undergone silicone penile implants have suffered severe side effects from defective devices. And that in Thailand, over 100 men, undergoing penis-enlargement procedure, have been treated after quacks injected their genitalia with all kinds of shit. In the US, on average one serious complication occurs in every 500 circumcisions. Lots of pictures of virile naked men, but no matter, every issue of *Celebrate The Self* has several fascinating items going for it. There is a Catholic here, who, at age 15, becomes acutely aware and guilt-ridden over 'wasted seed' during masturbation and so develops the notion that if the seed doesn't actually come out it will somehow reduce the 'sin' quotient... Conscientious and spiritually correct personages, that's what we like.

Fortean Times

The Journal of Strange Phenomena No. 86 [68pp £2.20] This publication has been going for a long time, and it has matured well from its early days as an A5 glossy fanzine-like edition to the full-colour glossy thing it is today. The stories are generally taken from other press sources and all have a common theme of weirdness. This issue's main story is the 'discovery' of a living dinosaur by a Japanese monster-hunting television crew. The reproduced image of a supposed monster in a lake looks nothing like a prehistoric creature but



very much like two men in a canoe, puttering over the water to do their fishing. But the TV crew insist no motorised canoes were on the lake that day... so, well, maybe it was a brontosaurus after all. Other stuff in this issue includes erupting manhole covers, a flying devil-monkey, miraculous images of Jesus (did they ever publish the photo of Michael Winner's underpants and the spontaneous image of Jesus contained within the skid marks?), a man skewered on a tree branch, millenium panic and other curious occurrences. Always a fine read is this, let's just hope it doesn't over do the X-Files stuff.

Stimulationism

Mark Stevens [7pp £1.50. Friction, c/o M. Stevens, 40 Gordon Road, Charlton, London, SE7 7RW] A magazine-length preamble on the subject of 'Stimulationism', a term that author Mark Stevens uses to describe — briefly — the 'chance to participate in our own essential being, by way of changing what a human is, to pre-empt the next stage of anatomical development'. In other words, a call for people to get up and do something (i.e. if using drugs, do not think of them as a 'substitute for real experience but as agents that will modulate the quality of interaction with the world'). Some interesting points are raised, in a flow-of-consciousness, Colin Wilson-esque way, but the fact that 'Stimulation' comes over with having less emotion than a University dissertation didn't motivate us to do much other than get to the end quickly. Nor does the visually barren layout help matters (there is one illustration). Whether a magazine espousing it's idiom in a single, long, essay will ever catch on is difficult to say — okay, it won't — but with discipline and a better presentation, Stevens' efforts could

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well be worth checking out in the future. Incidentally, before you send your £1.50 postage paid for a copy of 'Stimulationism' — or whatever the mag might be called, that's only our guess — write first and check that it is actually available. Ours is a 'pre-publication' copy.

Dr Ducky Doolittle's

Hypnotic Releases

[Night & Day Productions, PO Box 1474 / Sty. Stn., New York, NY 10008-1474, USA]

A slim retail catalogue put out by the 'buxom scientist' Dr Ducky Doolittle (a girl wearing rubber gloves, goggles and a tattoo), and containing all manner of curious art, sometimes sexual stuff, with a hardy female perspective. Typical Hypnotic releases include *Makin' Juice*, a tiny limited run booklet which claims to be 'A collage of one women's masturbatory practices, including her paintings, illustrations, dreams and humour'; Ducky's *Scientifically Sanctioned Strip Flip Book*, in which the head honcho herself removes items of clothing in a New York City photo booth; and now also the *Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black Colouring Book*, documenting the 'illustrious ornamental habits of the music sensation' that is VHOKB (with Kembra Pfahler's fashion designs thrown in for good measure)? Eek! Where's the Exit! A couple of pages in the catalogue are devoted to zines that got the good doctor 'off'. You can also order a pair of Ducky's freshly soiled panties for \$50 (she's cute, so it might be worth it).

Silver & Steel Workshop

[PO Box 30, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6UX]

Fancy a night on the rack or with genitals encased in a jockstrap made of metal ('makes erection painful and sex impossible')? Then you probably need look little further than the latest Silver

& Steel Workshop catalogue, makers of erotic jewellery and accessories. Everything from relatively innocuous stuff like brooches depicting the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian and pendants of men and women in bondage, through to extravagant 'furniture' like a full-size body cage (the type in which criminals of yore were suspended by the roadside) and a pillory. Prices vary considerably but a rack ('2" high by 8" long, with one pair fixed straps and one pair etched to lever and ratchet winch, fit wrists or ankles') will set you back £145. Inquire about the bed of nails. The *Silver & Steel* catalogue is £1, refunded with first order.

Born Bad: The Story of Charles Starkweather & Caril Ann Fugate *Jack Sargeant* [147pp. Creation Books. £7.95]

Charles Starkweather modelled himself on James Dean and 'rebelled' against society by engaging on a kill spree across Nebraska in 1957. His 14-year-old sweetheart, Caril Ann Fugate, accompanied him. Jack Sargeant's book is split into two sections: the first details the true story of the homicidal couple, and the second chronicles Starkweather and Fugate's influence in mainstream cinema. It is with some relief that Sargeant tackles 'From Nebraska to the Heart of Darkness' (as is the title of the first essay) in a straight, fact-based manner and not — as per *Psycho*, Creation's earlier book on the life of killer Ed Gein — via the

BOOKS

Hammer of the Gods

Nietzsche. Compiled, translated & edited by Stephen Metcalf [240pp. Creation Books. £9.95]

Friedrich Nietzsche is further out than Saturn's moons, and weirder than quantum physics, but he still has the power to hypnotise. A screwed-up visionary drunk on metaphor and aphorism he's the pessimistic romantic who's appealing bleakness left a legacy of appalling blackness. A man who dreamed of the perfected *übermensch*, but contracted syphilis in a brothel and died in a madhouse. A man whose luxurious facial hair makes Noel Gallagher's eyebrows and Freddie Mercury's moustache look undernourished, yet he still exerts a stronger gravitational fascination than most neutron stars.

Nietzsche died 16 years before this century began. Philosophy, he said, is only the autobiography of philosophers. And his own began 'drunk on the narcotic pessimism of Schopenhauer and Wagner'. Kierkegaard too. It also began with Deicide — murdering god. *Hammer of the Gods*, in this new translation by Nietzsche disciple Stephen Metcalf, is a kind of 'Nietzsche's Greatest Hits' sampling his important texts from first to last while adding various posthumously published fragments, letters and notebook jottings.

According to Metcalf, Nietzsche's work started with a 'vivisection of humanity', pining myth and illusion down to its most basic DNA. Part of this process involves exterminating irrational anachronisms such as the Judeo-Christian god. Obvious now. Apocalyptic at the time. What he then discovered beyond nihilism was 'pure Will, without the confusions of intellect'. This, of course, is to reduce a long, subtle and complex process developed through chapters with titles like 'The Ecstasy of the Tragic', 'Will to Power', and 'Arrows of Malice'. Arguments themselves extracted from a bulky body of work published across an eventful 1871 to 1888 time-frame. He also wrote with a passionate excess of stylistic beauty. Its poet sweep becomes breathtaking.

Nietzsche was a solitary man. He experienced a single brief and humiliating sexual involvement throughout his life. And as philosophy is autobiographical, so his philosophy also concerns the individual. Its bleakness appeals to those who consider themselves outsiders, beyond Good and Evil, beyond the narrow confines of conventional morality. His prose is incandescent. Metcalf's pyrotechnical introduction captures its flavour, and even shoves it out a little further, almost. It is a megabyte high of furiously contagious imagery.

But language is an odd animal. A writer codes a series of agreed symbols on a page. By decoding those symbols they can make a reader laugh, cry, become depressed or elated. But it's still just a game of printed symbols. And when Nietzsche writes 'men should drive towards the future over a thousand bridges and gangways, and there should be more war and more inequality among them' (!), well — I've seen this future. I've been to Moss Side. I've seen it in action, and I don't believe in it.

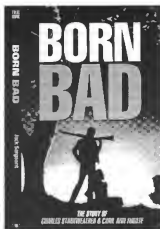
Jarvis Cocker said you can't blame the Beatles for Phil Collins.

You can't blame Nietzsche for the solitary misfits who use him to legitimise atrocity either. As Metcalf himself concedes, 'as the maggot man, the ultimate pale, ill-constituted, decadent failure learns to croak a few of Nietzsche's hook lines as founding dogmas of the Thousand Year Reich'.

But beyond his Good and Evil disciples, Nietzsche remains an intellectual intoxication of awesome power. And one not to be read on an empty brain.

[Andrew Darlington]





means of 'faction' story-telling. It's a fast read, but use of official testimony and passages from Starkweather's autobiography (written in prison and presumably unpublished) give depth to the proceedings. There are some interesting tidbits to be had, such as Starkweather's father selling signed photographs of his son outside prison, and the killer requesting extradition to Nebraska upon his capture in Wyoming, because he sought the relatively 'quick' death of the electric chair in the former state as opposed to the gas chamber of the latter (ironically, the governor in Wyoming was opposed to the death penalty altogether and chances are that Starkweather would have faced a life sentence and not death if he had stayed put). The section concludes with a little psycho-insight as to possible motivations behind the killings — whether Starkweather's returning to the scenes of his crimes shows a 'self-destructive urge to be caught' is debatable, we're inclined to go for the point noted earlier in the book, that Starkweather had an IQ '13 points higher than a near idiot'. 'Gun Crazy', the second essay, is written with greater confidence and takes the Starkweather/Fugate 'subgenre' of the Road movie through three decades of mainstream cinema. It starts at Terrence Melick's 1973 production, *Badlands*, and concludes with Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers*. Though Sargeant defines his criteria for inclusion as Hollywood mainstream (hence James Landis' *The Sadists* [sic] is out), it is odd he should go altogether both versions of *Gun Crazy*, considering their parallel with the Starkweather/Fugate case. Illustrated.

Armageddon 2000
Kenneth Rayner Johnson [256pp
Creation Books. £9.95]
Twenty-or-so years ago, a peculiar

hybrid of 'non-fiction' books took off with the public, combining scientific supposition with out-on-a-limb theories of a sometimes supernatural nature. These books usually offered an alternative history of mankind or warned of impending global catastrophe. Erich von Däniken can be placed at the forefront of the movement. With the publication of his book *Chariots of the Gods?* in 1968, von Däniken claimed that in the distant past visitors from other planets regularly visited the earth. Debunking Däniken's 'evidence' became, in itself, fuel for further pulp non-fiction (*a la* *The Space Gods Revealed*). (This sounds like it'd make a good full-blown article.) When the existence of possible Black Holes was at the fore of the public imagination, Professor John Taylor wrote a completely nihilistic volume on how Black Holes would prove to be the end of the universe. With *The Dark Side of History*, Michael Edwards suggested that Black Magic be an integral part of the evolution of man. But not all of these books were so clear cut in their objectives. Kenneth Rayner Johnson's *The Zarkon Principle* — reprinted by Creation under the punchier title, *Armageddon 2000* — falls into this category. Despite taking as a starting point apocalypse in the year 2000AD, Johnson isn't particularly convinced by the theories he is putting forward and seems far more interested in divulging the interesting facts, ideas and anecdotes for a wide range of topics he has amassed over the years. The subjects to which he refers and covers in the book are wide-ranging to say the least, and include everything from Jesus Christ to Adolf Hitler, from matter transportation to the Ark of the Covenant. Indeed, *Armageddon 2000* is illustrated by so many diverse and apparently opposing elements, that at times it comes over like the teachings of Bob Dobbs in the Church of the

SubGenius. Come the end of the book, no reader will be convinced of imminent destruction (unless, of course, they're already in preparation for the final countdown and have names like Azekiel). But then, that's hardly the point... Fortunately, Johnson doesn't read like a quack — an asset when distancing oneself from the conspiracy-conscious minded. An index wouldn't have gone amiss, however.

King Pulp. The Wild World of Quentin Tarantino.

Paul Anthony Woods. [Plexus. £9.99.] As Uma Thurman OD'd on heroin in *Pulp Fiction*, we seem to have OD'd on Tarantino in the media as of late, what with the multitude of Quentin books flooding the market and credits in movies he might just have walked past the set on. It would be wrong to say he's over-rated, however — over-lauded is more applicable to our man Quent. Even so, *King Pulp* has its place and is pretty much a definitive study of his brief career to date. Chock full of interesting anecdotes and engaging accounts, Woods has certainly done his research. Each film, whether directed or written by Tarantino, is given a whole chapter providing a full synopsis, writing sources, production deals and other accounts of film industry trivia. He also highlights intentional or unintentional discrepancies found in *Pulp Fiction* and *Reservoir Dogs* and imputes them as either continuity errors or Tarantino playing with his audience. Spotting these glitches must involve absolute attention while viewing the films. There's a frivolous but endearing chapter where Tarantino rambles on about his favourite directors and movies. In this he comes across as a nerdy film fan spouting off one title after another in some kind of spontaneous chain reaction. Even so, it has the effect of sending you digging in those old attic-stored boxes and rooting through dust-covered videos you'd forgotten you had. Already suspected of nicking other people's ideas, *King Pulp* does indeed confirm that Tarantino is an unrepentant plagiarist — which is evident in his films, fine pieces of cinema though they are. When you learn that he offered Roger Avary, co-author of *Pulp Fiction*, his dues in advance if he would drop his name from the credits (this Avary did, much to his later chagrin), and used the plot of *City On Fire* for *Reservoir Dogs* (an already well-publicised accusation), it remains to be seen whether Tarantino is a genuine stand-alone Golden Boy of cinema or just another Tobe Hooper. The book is profusely illustrated with colour and black and white photos.





Hammer Of The Gods: Led Zeppelin Unauthorised
 Stephen Davis [376pp. Pan Books. £5.99]

This is one of the most infamous of all Rock biographies, updated from its 1985 printing with a new chapter detailing the recent Page & Plant reunion. It doesn't really matter whether you like Led Zep or not (though you're missing out if you don't). *Hammer Of The Gods* is less about music than it is a chronicle of excess: booze, violence, underage groupies, drugs and general mayhem of the n° degree. Author Stephen Davis becomes notably irritable when not divulging some preposterous tour story, and so barely leaves one scandalous anecdote before plunging quickly into the next. There's virtually none of that band-members-as-infants stuff and learning to play the guitar — Jimmy Page is in the Yardbirds on one page, turn over and Led Zep are virtually up-and-running and wreaking havoc across the United States. From inadvertently inventing 'head banging' (kids at their concerts were noticed to be slamming their foreheads into the stage in time to the heavy rhythm), by way of Robert Plant's megalomaniacal outbursts (shouting from a Los Angeles balcony, 'I'm a golden god!'), Led Zep swiftly rise the precarious Rock 'n' Roll stepladder (with assistance from their suffer-no-fools manager and the strong-arm tactics of their road crew). Along the way, captured here for posterity, are such tales as the band going to dinner dressed for a lark in drag, only to find Stevie Wonder at their hotel table, who, upon hearing of the gag through the embarrassed fits of laughter, naturally believes his hosts are taking the piss; through to Zep and friends using champagne bottles and live fish to fuck bound groupies. The whole story is preposterous and then some. A

lot is made of the supposed connections between the band and the occult (all but John Paul Jones is said to have sold his soul to the devil), the dues of which were finally collected courtesy of drummer John Bonham, found dead following a binge of vodka and ham rolls in September 1980. No doubt *Hammer Of The Gods* has done much to substantiate and perhaps help create some of the aura surrounding Led Zeppelin. But unlike, say, Albert Goldman's 'exposés' on Presley and Lennon — in which Goldman comes over as genuinely vindictive, distilling the story in order to exact its most gross aspects — Davis actually reads like he gives a damn and to be simply telling it like it is. However, if this was a work of fiction you wouldn't swallow a single word of it. A true and deserved modern classic.

Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs
 The Authorised Autobiography
 John Lydon with Keith and Kent Zimmerman [385pp. Coronet Books. £5.99]

(Is it possible to have an unauthorised autobiography?) As books detailing the rise in popularity of Punk Rock and the Sex Pistols go, this is perhaps the most accurate — not simply because the story is being told by one who was at the nub, but because Lydon refuses to don rose-coloured shades and view the whole thing as a splendid piece of nostalgia: shit at the time, but glorious now, in old age. What's more, he doesn't buy that Situationist bollocks, either. That said, you have to wade through almost 100-pages of Johnny growing-up — fascinating as it might be, it's not why we're here. But stick with the book, because when McLaren wanders in and the Sex Pistols roll centre stage, Rotten takes off into the stratosphere, on a collision course for earth and collecting scuzz aplenty along the way. Many of the other major figures who were part of the Punk 'scene' offer their views, which more often than not contradict Rotten. And Rotten mercilessly slags off all and sundry (himself included) with McLaren naturally taking much of the brunt of his anger — but, surprisingly, not nearly so much as Vivienne Westwood, who throughout the book comes over as a sad aunt completely oblivious to the 'point'. Much sadder than being a manipulative twat. Whenever Lydon sticks the boot in, however, he validates his reasons. As for the music, it's almost a wonder that the Pistols managed to get as far as they did, what with the whole entourage hating one another so much and the management being so 'sensitive'. (Makes the idea of a reunion all the more ridiculous.) At the same time, hardly a chapter goes

by without at least one solid golden opportunity slipping by. Sid Vicious comes over as one would expect: a clown, easily swayed by whoever's closest at hand and has the loudest voice. (Perhaps the Pistols sold their souls to the Devil, too?) When Lydon grants seemingly innocent events an acerbic twist (Siouxsie Sioux' first washing machine, for instance), you know that come the Pistols' tour of the US, spreading themselves across Redneck territory, things are going to get seriously twisted. And they do. Apart from its slow start, if there is one other drawback to *Rotten*, it's the cumbersome presentation — the way occasional chapters are suddenly given over to 'guest speakers' with nary a pause for breath.

I'm A Believer: My Life Of Monkees, Music and Madness
 Micky Dolenz and Mark Beg [217pp Hyperion. \$9.95]

It mustn't have been easy trying to wrench this book from Dolenz — always the most versatile and funniest of wacky Beatles-clone popsters, The Monkees — as he never really seems to have given a toss about his famed musical past. Hence it's something of a mystery why his autobiography is so... um... well... polite. Sure, there are some digs and dark revelations, but they're all too rare. At the very least, you'd expect I'm A Believer to be the literary equivalent of Head, with Dolenz snapping himself out of his teenybopper Monkees past by destroying their image and propelling himself into the here and now. Instead, it's written in a kooky, close-on juvenile way. Things start promising enough, with the group — sans Mike Nesmith — backstage at the 1986 MTV Music Awards. Here the Mancunian dwarf Davy Jones is throwing a tantrum upon learning that the next cut off of the Monkees Greatest Hits album package isn't one of his. (What a prick.) But from here on, I'm A Believer is never more than a moderately entertaining pot-boiler, with each step of Dolenz' story carefully plotted so as not to tread too heavily on anyone's toes. Worse still, while sex and drugs are acknowledged as having been available in abundance, as for debauched, altered-consciousness anecdotes there are none! What good is that? The story is brimming with avenues begging to be explored, but which are, instead, casually side-stepped (Jimi Hendrix was the short-lived support act when the Monkees were on tour. Dolenz almost became Frank Zappa's drummer, and so on). There are a couple of entertaining pages devoted to the shooting of Head,

which Dolenz describes as being one of the "high points of my career". But the most interesting aspects of the book, and the only thing Dolenz really seems to care much about when it comes to the Monkees, are those detailing the band's plight to try and access control over their music — songs were initially recorded by session men, often without any consultation with the band whatsoever. (The Monkees could indeed play their instruments... but not particularly well. Check out Rhino's reissue of *Live-1967*, which has the group going through their hits in true, stop-at-nothing, garage band fashion.) This collection of whimsicality is probably the closest the world is going to get to an exposé of The Monkees phenomenon, which makes it doubly disappointing.

Amok: A Compendium of Psycho-Physiological Investigations. Edited by Stuart Swezey. [476pp. Amok. £13.99]

Originally promoted way back in the *Amok Fourth Dispatch* catalogue — which was also edited by Swezey — this book has been a long time coming, but now it's here it proves to be worthy of the wait. A monster of a tome it is too. Coming in at almost 500 pages this so-called 'sensurround edition' has articles on autoerotic fatalities, self-mutilation, amputee fetishism, trepanation, a lengthy interview with *Mondo Cane* director Gualtiero Jacopetti, sound weapons, and loads more. The articles are reprints from various publications as wide ranged as *The Fortean Times* and *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*; the former providing an interview with head-boring Amanda Feilding, the latter one of several sources for the truly wacky autoerotic deaths. It is these medical texts which provide the more interesting articles, as much due to

their clinical, unemotive writing style as their unintentionally humorous subject matter. Though tragic, the fatal events have that Milliganesque (Steven MP not Spike) humour that tends to lessen the seriousness of the situation. The death of the person is secondary to the god-awful embarrassing position they were found in. Here are just a few examples: A naked man is found slumped over a carpet-beating vacuum cleaner, a shit-caked sawn-off table leg lying on the carpet between his legs. The vacuum cleaner is still running, with the brushes spinning around his groin area. Semen splashes indicate he orgasmed at the moment of heart failure. Another man dies while masturbating to pictures of horses, one showing a stallion's dick penetrating the anus of a man. Headphones around the victim's head emit sounds of horse neighs and snorts. A man drove his VW to an isolated spot, stripped naked and secured himself to the rear bumper of the car with a lengthy chain and body harness. He set the steering wheel to its maximum swing, tied it in place, started the engine, then jumped out and allowed the car to slowly drive itself in a wide circle. For his kicks he would follow the car, the constant pull on the chain giving him his sexual buzz. Unfortunately when he grew bored or tired and he ran back into the car to switch the engine off, the chain slipped under the rear wheel and wrapped around the axle. The shortening chain pulled the men to a slow and painful death crushed against the wheel arch. Another section of the book relates the case of a gay guy whose partner shoved a ping pong ball deep into his anus then poured in a concrete mix (!!!). The concrete set into an irremovable solid plug and the poor fool had to stagger to hospital and ask surgeons to remove the blockage. The block they pulled out his rectum was a perfect sculpture complete with muscular contraction rings and indentations. And people think being rushed to hospital wearing dirty underwear is humiliating! You can also learn about the penis of sonic devices being developed (at least they were in the mid-70s when some of these articles were originally published) by government scientists and the effect such weapons have on us, the unsuspecting public.

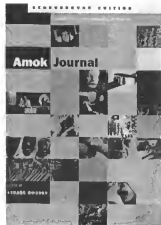
Brimming with scientific elucidations and sex-death anecdotes, *Amok Journal* makes an ideal and essential coffee-table book.

[See inside back cover for order details.]

Chopper

Peter Cave [125pp. Redemption Books. £7.99]

"What say we'll go and snap a few minds in Piccadilly?... We'll suck eggs off the pavement, maybe rough up a few Hippies and have some fun with the queers." Peter Cave's fictional tales focusing upon Hell's Angels in Britain were first published at the beginning of the Seventies. A few years later, another novelist, Mick Norman, took to exploiting the public's fascination with this new breed of motorcycle outlaw. His books too, were gritty, full of violent situations, mad characters, end easy sex — and next to Cave, comparatively high-brow to boot. Mick Norman reads like Nabokov after Cave, whose *Chopper* (King of the Angels) cuts through all pretence of literary fine-tuning in order to deliver a full-throttle story: short, sharp and to the point. The characters are whittled down to basics and held firmly in check less they slow the proceedings down in any way. The principle player is Chopper Harris, second-in-command of a chapter of bikers (whose base is never clearly defined, but apparently situated someplace around East Ham or Tottenham), who's dream it is to get himself a Harley Davidson cycle and challenge the leadership of Marty, and in so doing get his girl, Elaine. The book starts off with a rumble between the pill-popping Angels and a group of Skinheads from Dalston and progresses in like-minded fashion, culminating in the only ending possible for a by-the-numbers anti-hero such as Chopper. Indeed, *Redemption Books'* reissue of *Chopper* (and it's companion piece, *Mama*) is sorely missing Cave's pulp sensibilities, presenting it in a deluxe wrap-around cover and — gag — with a photo



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section. Some of the effort would have been better used to proof read the thing a little closer.

Mama

Peter Cave [150pp, Redemption, £7.99] This, the sequel to *Chopper*, chronicles the rise to power of Elaine Williams who takes the name 'Big Mama', gets a hold of her dead lover's hog and is soon the leader of a gang of Hell's Angels who run amok in Seventies London. Soon consumed by her new power, Mama orchestrates the gang into a Mafia-style crime syndicate. Starting off small with the robbing and beating of a couple of Suedeheads and building up to the robbing of petrol stations, extortion and eventually the hijacking of a truck, Mama becomes obsessed with a twisted interpretation of the American Dream, whereby she wants to make enough cash to take her chapter to the States to relieve Easy Rider. Okay, so Booker prize material this ain't, but it is pulp trash fiction at its finest. The story races on like a Norton Commando ridden by the devil himself. The characterisation is minimal but hell, you really don't need it. By the end of the relatively short 150 pages you are left satisfied at the outcome. *Mama* is a glorified interpretation of the whole biker scene, steeped more in myth than actuality. Despite the fact that the book has as much relevance to true bikers as I do to Hollywood musicals, it's easy to see how it came to be a best-seller when originally published, influencing countless spotty teens to dream of living the rebel lifestyle. If you fancy a little bit of nostalgic escapism you could do a lot worse than this. [Brett Keddle]

VIDEO

Terminal Force

d: William Mesa [15 cert. Columbia Tristar] William Mesa, special effects whiz and pal of Sam Raimi, makes his directorial debut with the visually huge, intellectually tiny, *Terminal Force*. Brigitte Nielsen stars (oh-ho) as a super-Amazon sent to Las Vegas, Earth, in order to procure the mysterious Fire Crystals (the "foundation of power... they are life itself"), which will save the subjugated race of a distant world from evil powers and explosive special effects. Naturally, it's not as easy as that, and Brigitte is followed through time and space by mad, bad Kyler, who wants the crystals for his own team. Perhaps it doesn't need spelling out, but *Terminal Force* is an unapologetic remake of *The Terminator*, lifting ideas, plot and set-

pieces wholesale from Cameron's picture (having a police station taken apart by the rampaging Kyler, calling Brigitte's character "Arnold"; etc). That said, Mesa keeps the pressure on with action aplenty and the movie never dips much below 70mph in its race to set up the next cosmic encounter between the feuding protagonists. Most everyone attacks their role with a gusto suggesting they believe the endeavour will lead to better and bigger parts. Nielsen, on the other hand, appears completely out-of-touch with her own dialogue ("Mortal wounds alone can not destroy him"). Mesa's audacity in even attempting such a big-budgeted and obvious rip-off carries the thing off with diabolical energy, and several sequences are even memorable in their own right (the child who morphs into a fully-fledged robot, for instance). Not the best, but *Terminal Force* has no right to be quite this good.

The Operation

d: Jacob Pander [no cert. 210 Productions, 1408 SE 22nd #6, Portland, OR 97214, USA] This short film (under 13 minutes duration) won the award for Best Experimental Film at the 1995 New York Underground Film Festival. It begins with a man being wheeled into an observation room on a stretcher. After a cursory examination of the naked figure, a female 'surgeon' (dresses and 'assists' the patient in getting erect. Figures in protective clothing observe from the balcony as the two engage in fucking and sucking and finally, orgasm. The end. The *Operation* is akin to about a million Color Climax porno loops if not for one notable exception: its look. Shot on video in black & white infrared, every vein and globule on the two writhing bodies is visible and accentuated in a most disconcerting and original way — indeed, the forms are almost translucent in appearance and seem to 'fuse' together (there are heat traces on his dick after it's been in her mouth, etc). The use of infrared is an inspired idea, managing to both distance the subjects from the viewer, while at the same time exposing them in a way beyond mere nakedness. By this token, the cyber subplot (surgical instruments; robed people observing from a balcony; future sex; whatever) is irrelevant. No doubt the context and the preliminary wheeling-in of the patient is intended to be some comment on media and the sex act as act (probably), but instead it proves to be more a distraction. An apology, almost. How brilliant it would be if *The Operation* secured the usual banal trappings of your common-or-garden porno featurette (such as cardboard dialogue; useless situations)



and was slipped into the marketplace as just another porno product (Director Jacob Pander has worked on a number of short films, a music video for Dharma Bums, as well as collaborating with his brother Arnold in the field of comics.)

Nightwatch

d: Ole Bornedal [Widescreen. Subtitled [cert. 18 Tartan] A film about a serial killer that isn't American and is good? Yes, indeed. Set for the most part in a city morgue where a student has taken a temporary job as night watchman, this movie is an original and occasionally chilling murder mystery. Someone is sniffing the local hookers and the body count is continually updated by TV news reports, but Inspector Wormer is confident the killer is going to come unstuck very soon. Martin's duty as watchman involves regular walks around the empty building to various check-points, one of which is located in



the cold-storage room where fresh cadavers are stored. Above each trolley hangs an alarm cord just in case one of the bodies that is brought in isn't quite dead. The pull-switch activates a lamp in the watchman's office, "but it will never happen," Martin is told during his instructional tour. He doesn't believe it, and nor do we. Martin has a friend who is a bit of a prankster, but who can also be quite violent, and in Martin's eyes, he's a potential killer. One night Martin's girlfriend visits him in the morgue and they have sex in the cold-room. The following morning one of the corpses — the killer's latest victim — is found on its trolley with legs spread wide, obviously the prey of a nocturnal necrophile. Inspector Wormer notices semen splashes on the floor, which happen to be Martin's, and collects them for analysis. He asks Martin for a blood sample in order to eliminate him as a suspect... ooooo. Things only get worse and creepier.

This is finely crafted with a convincing storyline, something that does make a refreshing change, these days. The identity of the killer is a well-kept mystery, and when the psycho is finally exposed it is a genuine surprise. Allowing the viewer to see the killer when all the characters remain oblivious adds to the chilling atmosphere of the film. The only unrealistic and clichéd sequence is when Martin finds a bloody trail leading from the cold-room, down the corridors, to a body. He reports it to the police who turn up to find nothing out of place — body back on trolley, blood mopped up etc. This single foible can be forgiven, however, because the rest of the film drives on like a well-maintained powerful engine.

Addicted To Murder

d: Kevin J. Lindenmuth [18 cert. Screen Edge, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Anne's, FY8 1RL]

Joel as a little boy encounters Rachel, a vampire in the woods near his home. From this day forward, his life is inextricably entwined with the bloodsucker. When he gets a little older, he uncovers a whole sub-society of vampires living in the city (they have their own night-club). Joel gets the bite and before he knows it — and against his better judgement — cannot help but lust for blood himself. The story is told both in retrospect and in real time — intercutting the development of Joel-as-killer with psychiatric evaluations and mock chat show interviews with NYPD officers and Joel's old lady. This might sound an interesting concept on paper, but once *Addicted To Murder* switches to the 'studio set' and the furrowing of brows, you might as well take a nap. The juxtaposition simply



Addicted to Murder

does not hang together. (Someone in post-production obviously didn't think so, either — every other scene commences with a header like 'Ten Years Later' and 'Later That Night...') On a good note, Rachel wants Joel to 'murder' her to 'remind her of what it's like to be human'. Of course, as she can't die, this results in her actively encouraging the boy to slit her throat from ear to ear, stab her, drop an electrical appliance into the bath with her, run her through with a chain saw, etc., all the time with a charming come-to-bed expression on her face. You, the reader, can determine whether this alone is worth the investment. Then again, it might anger you even more, knowing that Lindenmuth forsake the good bits for a retread of *The Hunger* and *The Lost Boys*. (And chose Mick McCleery to play the lead — overwrought with a belly to match.)

The Bedroom

d: Hisayasu Satō [18 cert. Screen Edge, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Anne's, FY8 1RL]

Made in 1992, *The Bedroom* (a rather bland title next to its grandiose aka — *An Aria on Gazes*) is part of the 'Pink Cinema', a tradition of erotic film which emerged in Japan in the Sixties. Hisayasu Satō's entry is set in some undetermined time in the future (presumably) and focuses upon an unfaithful wife who works in the 'Sleeping Rooms', a brothel where the girls take an hallucinogen known as Halcion. This knocks them unconscious and allows the client to do with them whatever they will. Kyoko (or is it

Maya?) tires of taking the drug and decides to feign sleep with her visitors, not opening her eyes to look for fear 'I would see hell in there'. (In actuality, gas-masked businessmen in rubber attire, and bottom dwellers.) In between her bouts in the Sleeping Rooms, Kyoko befriends a schoolgirl who is using the brothel as a subject for a thesis. Things get real sticky when video reality and unreality are brought together and a girl is found murdered, Kyoko is raped in the streets (beneath the gaze of a security camera) and her husband appears to be losing interest in her. (It turns out he is surreptitiously visiting her in the Sleeping Rooms)... It's interesting to compare the 'sexual dependency' of *The Bedroom* with George Lucas' earlier, not altogether different, *THX 1138*. The basic premise of Satō's movie and many of his set pieces are haunting without Lucas' clinical detachment. Shot on 35mm, *The Bedroom* utilises bursts of video image throughout, and the intimacy that the Camcorder brings often supersedes that of the 'real thing': i.e. the main players like to film one another, each with a video camera in hand; Kyoko masturbates with a camera pressed to her groin, the image plugging directly into the TV screen. *The Bedroom* raises many interesting points about subjugation, objectification, and — stop us if you've heard this one before — voyeurism... but it's also highly charged and great to look at. Unfortunately, it does fall to pieces with its armchair detective-type revelations at the end. Stars Issei Sagawa, the man who killed and ate his Dutch girlfriend in a Parisian hotel room, who has since become a chef and something of a celebrity in his native Japan. Great (the movie, not Sagawa).



The Bedroom

Spare Me

d: Matthew Harrison [18 cert. Screen Edge, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Anne's, FY8 1RL]

A bit worrying when one is confronted by a film about ten pin bowling. When movies try to incorporate a sporting element they tend to be ridiculously clichéd and predictable or simply tedious. But hey, this one is fine, probably because there's hardly any bowling in it. Theo, an up-and-coming

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bowling star, is suspended from the game for 100 years after striking an opponent with his bowl. Lost without the sport he goes in search of the father he's never seen, but who happens to be a bowling legend. But his pop inspires nothing but contempt when Theo sees he now operates illegal dwarf bowling — a dwarf on a skateboard is used instead of a bowl — with his crooked partner Miles Kastle. Theo meets and gets off with Miles' daughter Sheila, who gets a kick out of mutilating Barbie dolls. But the relationship gets off to a sluggish start when Theo learns that her deranged incestuous brother, Junior, has escaped from the asylum and is coming home hoping to find someone to play his favourite game of Blueface, i.e. strangulation.

Spare Me is an engaging little movie with a cast of well-portrayed characters. The avoidance of any bowling events is a good thing, most references to the game occur in the confrontations between people. Kastle's henchmen are fended off by bending back their bowling fingers; Junior dies under a bowling alley mechanism; Theo finds a blood-dripping bowl in his vandalised father's house. Though the film is no major directing debut, Harrison is a commendable director destined for bigger things.

Rhythm Thief

d: Matthew Harrison. b/w [18 cert. Screen Edge, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1RL]
And, indeed, Harrison's next film is not exactly bigger, but certainly better. **Rhythm Thief**, shot in grainy b/w, is set on the streets of New York's Lower East Side. On these streets Simon tries

to earn a living by selling bootleg tapes of local bands. He has no friends, just hangers-on and a rival pirate who he regularly kicks off his selling patch. He lives in a squalid apartment where he is constantly harassed by a rogue on the lower floor who accuses him of stealing his TV. His immediate neighbour is always trying to sell him a TV or preaching biblical rhetoric. Simon is unfazed by anything. He is a soulless creature. He has a relationship with Cyd, a stress-relieving sex relationship only. One day members of a band who's material he has pirated catch him, kick the shit out of him, and trash his tape machine. He borrows money from the only person who trusts him and buys new equipment. A nuisance admirer asks if he can record a live band for him but gets caught in the act and shot dead. Simon leaves town with his old girlfriend who has brought messages of love from his mother. They are written all over her arms. While in exile they have sex on the beach. Simon goes back to NY to sell his pirate masters and repay the money he borrowed.

Truly a remarkable film which draws the viewer in through its powerful characterisations. The creatures who populate the film are thoroughly believable, each living out their own miserable existences, losers, one and all.

Martin Scorsese is to produce Harrison's next feature **Kicked in the Head**.

Beauty From The Beast: The Best Of Psychic TV and Genesis P.Orridge

d: Various [Exempt. Visionary, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1RL]
This collection of tunes and music

videos captures the Gen and Psychic TV in their exotic cabaret phase. The whole shebang kicks off with the band's biggest TOTP hit to date, 'Godstar' (an ode to Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones), followed by 'I.C. Water' (an ode to Ian Curtis of Joy Division, in which Gen talks to a brick wall, literally), and en route to the big finale encompasses 'loving' tributes to the likes of the Beach Boys, the Monkees, and Jimi Hendrix. As far as Psychic TV goes, this package is relatively painless if not for the in-between clips in which a hyperdelic Gen, surrounded by a halo of hero photos and shambolic video effects, explicates his theories on the 'controllers of illumination' and such like. (When these segments are playing we like to think that this is no longer **Thee Best Of Psychic TV**, but instead some blockhead on **Takeover TV**, babbling to the nation in a segment sandwiched between a **Trekkie** from Newcastle and a **Ganny** with a tip on how to chop an onion without tears [you hold a slice of bread in your mouth]) The best music-vid moments come by way of 'United 94', taken from a **Rave 'disconcert'** recorded by PTV in the US, and 'Horror House', part of the last live performance in Britain before the Gens were forced into exile. 'Good Vibrations' is a pretty faithful rendition of the old standard and the only music video here to be shot on any kind of budget (though it's made to look like a home movie à la all the other clips on the collection). 'R.U. Xperienced', on the other hand, with vocals provided by Gen's infant daughter, is a quaintly subversive and genuinely funny piece of entertainment. How can anyone fail to laugh at a frail kid paraphrasing the mega-macho, late, great Purple Fox? 'Are you experienced? Have you ever been experienced? Well — I am.' 'Commercial' these songs may be, but thankfully without much 'deciphering' to be done.

The Monochrome Set: Destiny Calling

d: The Monochrome Set & Tony Potts [Exempt. Visionary, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1RL]
The reason **The Monochrome Set** never got the attention they so deserved is that outwardly they appear to be a parody. Many full-time students prefer their music serious, and if it's a parody then they at least like it to be an absurdly obvious parody — like **Dread Zeppelin**. They need to get the joke as opposed to risk the joke being on them. Nevertheless, **The Monochrome Set** are most definitely not a send-up. If proof be necessary check out **Destiny Calling**, their only available visual record. Don't come expecting MTV-type editing techniques, or music-video



Rhythm Thief

storytelling, though. Characteristic of the band, these music films are more idiosyncratic than they are sympathetic to the tracks they accompany. (For the duration of 'Don't Touch', Bid — vocals, but not opening his mouth — stands still against a dark background.) Divided into four sections, the compilation traces The Monochrome Set across a decade-and-a-half of performing. Part One (1978-79) includes 'Viva Death Row' live in Berlin, while in Part Two (1980) there are extracts from *Strange Boutique: The Film*. Here, as a prelude to 'The Lighter Side of Dating', an art historian discusses at some length the paintings on the wall — what he is discussing and the paintings themselves, however, are not one and the same. All the films are shot on 8mm with the exception of material culled off-air and reflect Warhol by way of Méliès — imaginative, preposterous and exuberant rolled into one. Part Three (1984-86) sees the band during their most commercially successful — and, natch, oft times less interesting — period. (For 'commercial', read appearances on *The Tube* and *Eastern Eye*, an ethnic minority programme.) Again it combines material from a film project, one entitled *Local Shuffle*. (For whom were these films being made? Who has ever seen them? It is not without irony that Part Four (1990) is something of a full-circle for the band: although the music is markedly less distinctive than that of earlier years, the group remain true to their convictions: no sell-out... well, not much anyway. *Destiny Calling* is a truly wonderful slip of a thing and a great companion piece to the *B&W Minstrels* collection of last year, rare and unreleased recordings from the Cherry Red archives. Hail

MUSIC

Machines of Loving Grace Gilt [CD Edel/Concrete]

No comparisons here with the likes of Jesus Lizard as we rarely entertain that kind of sound on our turntable, either (It's an educated guess). The European release of Gilt features several versions of the band's single, 'Richest Junkie Still Alive' (a tribute to Richard Branson, we believe) and... um... some spacy use of stereo. Hold on a second, is that a mark on the wallpaper there...

Sonja Kristina
Songs From The Acid Folk
[CD Fruithouse Music, 1 Christopher Place, Chilton St., London, NW1 1JF]
Fans of Acid and/or Folk, don't be suckered into this album without first appreciating that it was recorded in

Einsturzende Neubauten *Faustmusik* [Cassette, Mute Records]

Music might transcend cultural boundaries, but in the case of *Einsturzende Neubauten*'s new album I wish they'd provided a translator. A collection of music and spoken word, *Faustmusik* is supposedly based on the age-old Faust story as interpreted and re-told by Werner Schwab — the familiar events of the tale are now the mental delusions of Faust himself. On first listen, quite a confusing experience. But then, a lack of understanding German doesn't help matters since all the dialogue becomes redundant. That aside, the album is an intriguing mix of haunting sounds and unnerving tribal percussion. Apparently, instruments were specially constructed for the recording and performance of the piece. Great sounding things like book-page-turning machines and instruments created from tables and chairs. Highlights include the totally insane 'do do do doos' on 'Besetzt' (which rattles along like the Playschool theme on acid), the barren wind-type sound on 'Walpurgisnachtstehen', the stunning acappella number 'Still Am Abend' and the film score-esque 'Letztes Bild' (which has several long tortuous pauses leaving the listener to wonder has or hasn't it finished yet). A bizarre piece to get to grips with and a bummer to dance to. [Brett Keddie]

1991. That's what — over 20 years since the kind of music to which the title prescribes was deemed 'original'? Though *Curved Air* were one of the finer British bands of the Seventies and Sonja Kristina their lead vocalist, her solo album is to be avoided as surely as entering a door marked The Pox This Way. She has without question lost the plot and successfully amalgamated the sorriest bunch of lardass musicians (for their sake, let's hope neither one of them is under age 87) to produce the most pitiful attempt at 'contemporary' folk this side of the Yorkshire quartet, Foggy Dew-O. Creosote your eardrums as punishment for having listened.

Devil Doll *The Girl Who Was... Death*
[CD Renaissance, 770 E. Green St. #102, Pasadena, CA 91101, USA]
Patrick McGooan's *The Prisoner* provides a wealth of musical avenues down which Devil Doll can send their unique sound. That said, it is all the more frustrating that frontman, Mr Doctor, should so ruthlessly attempt to emulate Peter Hammill during the course of this prog opus. (Much more so than in the later Devil Doll release, *Sacrilgium*.) There simply is no need. Mr Doctor's vocal emissions — few of them that there may be — prove the only weak link in what is the

most dynamic and original music heard in years. From syncopated violins and full orchestral score, the band shifts freely and without hesitation into hard rock (Italian style) and back again. The *Prisoner* is a mere springboard for ideas, and *The Girl Who Was... Death* steers well clear of parody or a step-by-step 'concept', instead opting to 'interpret' McGooan's evergreen production whilst throwing in the occasional knowledgeable tip of the hat.

VIA Entertainment Thru Pain: A Tribute To Throbbing Gristle
[CD RRRRecords, 151 Page Street, Lowell, MA 01852, USA]

It's not often that tribute albums reach beyond the constraints of predictability, incessant boredom and/or pointlessness, so it's no surprise that this offering to the seminal Seventies industrial band, Throbbing Gristle, appears to take a run & jump into exactly the same trap. Absolutely none of the contributors do anything wholly exciting or unexpected with the covers they're selected because, ultimately, every one of them is still in some way indebted to harsh industrial music (and, more precisely, T.G.). Of all 12 contributors, only the Japanese Violent Onsen Geisha evade the totally obvious with their inclusion of a (probably sampled) rockabilly rhythm on 'What A Day'... although even this piece employs fucked-up, post-industrial tactics to make its 'point'.

At the end of the day, a compilation of this kind, also featuring the likes of Paul Lemos, Merzbow, Grae Corn, Emil Beaulieu and Skullflower, is destined for disaster. Sure, some of these people have cooked up some absolutely outstanding releases in their own right, but they should all hang their sorry heads in shame for even contemplating the notion of appearing on such an abortion of a release, uh, 'concept'. What are



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they going to do next, a tribute to Whitehouse? [Richo]

PRICK DECAY *Guidelines For Basement Nonfidel*
[LP Very Good Recs., Middendorferstr. 3, 44137 Dortmund, Germany]
Mostly, it's wise to approach bedroom loser outfits with several degrees of caution and, stealing a glance at Prick Decay's DIY wallpaper-covered first album, you could almost be forgiven for having done just that. Scrape beneath the surface (including sleeve-notes by Seymour Glass of Bananafish mag), though, and you'll find one of the best lo-fi experimental albums this side of A Handful Of Dust's Concord

Spliced tape muck, toys, violin, drums, distant blabbering, guitar, treatments, found objects and plenty of clanking & clattering are thrown together by this Scottish duo and their pals to produce a rewarding art & alcohol-damaged atmospheric record that beats the majority of efforts by their contemporaries back to the overflowing pools of effluent from whence they crawled.

File next to The Shadow Ring, No Neck Blues Band & Pork Queen albums. Prick Decay, awful name aside, could prove to be the tip of another iceberg worth steering into. [Richo]

VIA The Japanese/American Noise Treaty
[DBL CD Relapse, PO Box 251, Millersville, PA 17551, USA]
In an age where 'Jap-noise' compilations appear on a basis so regular it's rendered them virtually redundant, it's hard to find one that rises above the assembly line. Enter 'The Japanese/American Noise Treaty' which, with a rudimentary 'East Meets West' concept divided between two CD collections of noise garbage from both countries, is executed with an aura of smugness by a label who seem confident they've hit a winner.

Wrong

With the Japanese CD comprising exclusive material from real heavyweights in the sonic-overload genre, such as Masonna, Solmania, C.C.C.C., Incapacitants, Merzbow, Hijokaiden, Aube and so on, the American contender barely stands a chance. Formidable contributions from Crawl Unit, Daniel Menche, Haters and Richard Ramirez are weighed down by too many tenth-rate bedroom terrorists whose efforts to destroy your senses either go through the motions or are so lacklustre it's impossible to imagine who'd appreciate their work outside the braindead. Unfortunately, most of these idiots slip into the 'comfortable' shoes proffered by 'noise' because it's a

convenient way of cloaking ineptitude or a lack of integrity. Too many of these artists exist because they feel they can compete with, say, the Merzbow discs they own. And instead of trying to do something different with their sonic diets, they aim to 'out-noise' their peers & apparent influences for the sheer hell of it. There's not much between this attitude and trying to pump more iron at the gym than the local jocks...

Not saying that the Japanese bunch are faultless either. I'm certain that at least two contributors to the 'East' CD here are similarly motivated. However, when one considers the facts that Hijokaiden and Merzbow have been in a state of flux since forming well over a decade ago and, likewise, that many of their comparatively more recent contemporaries have adopted a genuine passion for exploring new avenues in sound processing and manipulation, it kinda puts things into perspective.

I'm convinced that many listeners & practitioners of 'noise' (a term I personally use loosely, since it can be used to describe all from The Stooges to Public Enemy and Pete Namlook as much as anything else), as in the 'type' portrayed on this release, approach it on a superficial & purely cathartic level without really questioning it. As such, it's sometimes hard to take them, and the fact that such releases as this are proving popular with them, too seriously. You know, it kinda says something when thrash/death-metal dolls are turning to 'noise' for their latest fix, doesn't it?

Simultaneously, it's evident on this release that the West have a long way to go before catching the scent of their

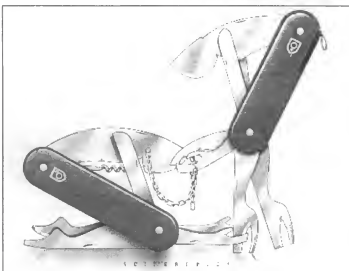
Eastern cousins. Considering experimental music from the West has played such a large part in initially inspiring the likes of Merzbow et al, this is pretty ironic.

Purchase this CD to witness the Japanese deal out several fatal blows and you'll be okay [Richo]

MISCELLANEOUS

Sciperepics [Julian Murphy Design, Top Floor, Satellite House, 160 Blackwarth Road, St. George, Bristol, BS5 8AG. Tel. 0117 935 0652]
Never able to find a decent postcard to send? Worry no more, for Julian Murphy has produced a set of 16 quite remarkable ones. The themes are of a household erotica nature... that is to say, objects you'd find at home transformed into people in erotic poses — a vacuum cleaner is a leather-clad and blindfolded woman; a pair of Swiss Army penknives are master and slave, electrical wiring becomes a couple fixed in the '69' position and so on. The Escher-like artwork is meticulously airbrushed, so clinical it looks computer generated, but in fact each picture is hand-drawn. The only disadvantage with them is that they are so nice you won't want to use them as postcards. Indeed, their quality and size (A5) begs for them to be framed and hung — or should that be mounted and well hung? A set of 16 costs £10.67 inc. p+p

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